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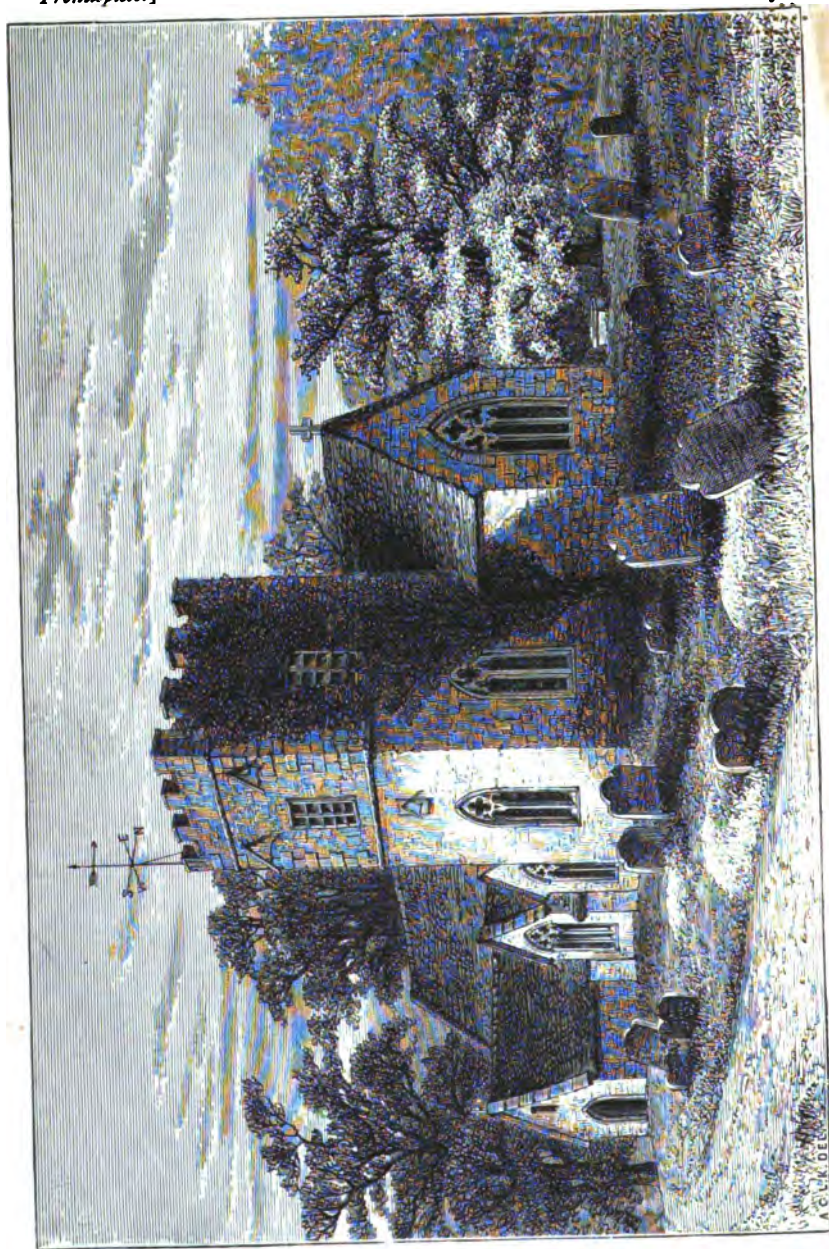
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THE DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES

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GILPIN'S FOREST SCENERY.

EDITED,

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH,

EDITOR OF "THE JOURNAL OF FORESTRY;"

AUTHOR OF

"AUTUMNAL LEAVES," "SYLVAN SPRING," "THE FERN PARADISE,"
"WHERE TO FIND FERNS," "MY GARDEN WILD," "OUR WOODLAND TREES,"
"THE FERN WORLD," "TREES AND FERNS," "BURNHAM BEECHES,"
"PEASANT LIFE," "THE ENGLISH PEASANTRY," ETC.



NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION.

London:

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,

CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET,

1883.

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TABLET.

"Mr. Heath has now passed from the tender blooms of spring to the sun-set dyed glories of autumn; but we recognize in the book before us the mind of long ago. There is the same tender regard for all that in nature lives; the same keen insight for revealing wonders unseen by the casual passer-by; the same power of holding his readers' deepest attention; and the same gift of adorning each subject to which he sets his hand. From the title of 'Autumnal Leaves' few could guess what a large store not only of varied and useful, but of pleasant information is gathered together. The book opens with a plea for the leaves of autumn. . . . Then he takes his reader for a walking tour round the New Forest. . . . Everywhere there is beauty, and Mr. Heath has the power to make us see it. . . ."

LONDON: SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON.

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PREFACE TO THE NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION.

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“AT last one of the most delightful works ever  
“written in connexion with sylvan scenery is  
“granted the well-deserved honour of an *Édition de*  
“*luxe*. No pains or expense have been spared, the  
“Editor tells us, ‘to make this book worthy of the  
“man who wrote it,’ and we must congratulate  
“those concerned on the high measure of success  
“they have conjointly achieved.”

Thus wrote one of the Reviewers of my Edition  
of Gilpin’s most famous and most delightful work ;  
and the fact that this high opinion was, in substance,  
endorsed by every influential section of the English  
Press, induces me to hope that the present New  
and Popular Edition may find a welcome amongst  
the large and increasing class of those who admire  
the great beauty of English woodland scenery.

In a letter written to me, not long before his  
death, by the late Lord Beaconsfield, occurred this  
memorable passage :—“ With regard to Trees, I

Man 22. E.H.W.

Recd. 10-22-36

passed part of my youth in the shade of Burnham Beeches, and have now the happiness of living amid my own 'green retreats.' I am not surprised that the ancients worshipped Trees. Lakes and Mountains, however glorious for a time, in time weary—Sylvan scenery never palls." In these words lies the secret of the attraction which woods and glades have always possessed for all peoples in all times.

FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH.

*London, November, 1882.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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NEARLY a century has passed since English readers were first charmed by the perusal of a series of works which, emanating from the pen of a clergyman, and composed in the quietness and seclusion of an English woodland village, were given to the world under the title of 'Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty.' Their Author was William Gilpin, 'Prebendary of Salisbury and Vicar of Boldre, in New Forest, near Lymington;' and the books have been handed down to the present generation, are carefully preserved in select libraries, are prized by book collectors, and are, still, eagerly sought for by those who have heard of Gilpin's fame but have never seen his writings.

But of all Gilpin's delightful works his 'Forest Scenery' is the most famous; and the best proof of the popularity of the particular portion of his 'Observations on Picturesque Beauty' published

under that title, is afforded by the circumstance that, at a period when there was little public interest in aught connected with forestry, this work should have passed through three editions.

During recent years public feeling on the subject of our wild woodlands has undergone a vast change ; and the reason for this change is not far to seek. Unfeelingly, persistently, remorselessly, the hand of the spoiler has been at work over all our fair island. Primeval woods have been robbed of their ancient splendour. Bricks and mortar have been rapidly choking the country—as God made it. The greenwood shade, over large areas, has given place to hot and dusty streets. Railways, mines, and manufactures have obliterated, all around us, the forest lawn, redolent of the perfume of wild plants ; the forest heath, empurpled with the bloom of heather, or golden with flowering gorse ; the woodland copse and ancient stately grove which sweetly strained the music of the winds. A population rapidly augmenting, and the increasing necessities of a commercial nation, advancing with rapid strides in the path of prosperity, have—necessarily—levied

heavy contributions upon the woods and fields. But above and beyond all that has been essential for promoting the advancement of a great people, there has been ruthless destruction of our beautiful woods. Public lands, which should at least have been free from wholesale appropriation, have shared the common fate. Commissioners, armed with power which has been practically despotic, have done their worst by bartering away open rights of common, by enclosing and facilitating the enclosure of wayside grounds and village greens, by laying the axe to the roots of grand old trees which sprang into existence before the commencement of modern history; and, in short, by annihilating, remorselessly, whatever their destroying hands could reach of the sylvan picturesqueness and beauty of our island.

This work, however, of enclosure and spoliation has, fortunately, of late years, created a strong public opinion, which before was non-existent, against the further destruction of our woods and forests; and, though very much of what was beautiful is gone beyond recall, we have, still, some delightful remnants left of our primeval trees, of rolling moor-

land, gorse-clad heath, and open down. The inhabitants of our great and growing cities—growing, unfortunately, at the expense of what God made—‘the country’—now thirst, as they never thirsted before, for green winding lane and sylvan glade, and, in the joyous holiday seasons, turn from the dry, hot air of the street to the breezy field-path with a yearning which was never before experienced in the same degree.

But long anterior—as we have seen—to the existence of that public feeling, created and strengthened by the action of those worse than modern vandals—men who have ruthlessly destroyed what have been beautifully and appropriately called ‘the buildings of God’—buildings which, once levelled with the ground, no human art can restore—and long before a sense of deprivation began to deepen public interest in our wild woods and open commons, the public mind was attracted to the subject by the quiet charm and the all-pervading simplicity of Gilpin’s writings. The success of these writings, therefore, in the absence of any immediately exciting cause, can be attributed only and solely to their intrinsic merit.



The first publication (in London) of the most famous of Gilpin's works, under the title of 'Remarks on Forest Scenery and other Woodland Views (relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty),' took place in 1791. But Gilpin informs us that he had written the manuscript of this work ten years before that date. It was 'printed for R. Blamire, Strand.' A Second Edition, by the same publisher, appeared in 1794. Gilpin died in 1804, but a Third Edition of the 'Forest Scenery' appeared in 1808, and the publishers of this edition were T. Cadell and W. Davies, of the Strand.

Twenty-six years afterwards, namely, in 1834, a New Edition, with notes, was published by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Bart. But, by a strange inadvertence, this Edition was printed from the text of the original Edition of 1791, and the Editor was, evidently, unaware that Gilpin had thoroughly revised the first issue, and had made important alterations in and additions to the work, most of which appeared in the Second Edition of 1794. Though he died four years before the publication of the Third Edition, he had made some alterations in the work subsequently to 1794, and

these duly appeared in 1808.\* It is known that he was most careful to re-read and correct his writings ; for he states that, in the course of the ten years during which he kept the manuscript of his 'Forest Scenery,' it received 'frequent revisal.' The fact that Sir Thomas Dick Lauder omitted the whole of the additions and corrections made by Gilpin greatly detracts, unfortunately, from the value of his Edition, which is, moreover, overloaded with notes, many of which, though in some degree relevant to the subject-matter of Gilpin's work, are altogether uncalled for, and, in consequence, make constant and unseasonable interruption in the pleasant flow of the text. In the Edition of 1834, in fact, it is not so much Gilpin as Lauder who is prominent throughout, and a considerable portion of the Editor's notes is taken up with a descriptive enumeration of trees, which would have been more in place in a horticultural handbook than amongst the pages of the delightful Author of the 'Forest Scenery.' In many essential points, too, in Lauder's Edition, no

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\* We learn from Mr. Garnett that the edition of 1808 is not in the British Museum.

attempt appears to have been made to correct or explain Gilpin's statements up to the date of the new publication—the most essential part of editorial duty. Where an editor approves, he should, in most cases, be silent—for his silence will pre-suppose acquiescence. This rule, however, Sir T. D. Lauder continually fails to observe; and his frequent interposition offends the reader. Nor was the First Editor of the 'Forest Scenery' more happy in his illustrations. He does not attempt to reproduce the charmingly-suggestive landscapes of Gilpin, or the drawings illustrating the portion of the work devoted to trees in combination, but gives, chiefly, a series of inferior wood engravings of singularly ineffective and clumsy drawings of individual trees. The letter-press of the First Edition is preserved in its entirety, but the spirit and the charm of Gilpin, in all other respects, are gone.

The delightful writer on 'Picturesque Beauty' made no profession to be a botanist. He was an artist, with a true artist's instinctive feelings—a deep love of Nature, an intense dislike of all formality, an intuitive recognition of the beautiful harmony prevailing in the natural world, together

with a keen perception of the picturesqueness produced by the suggestive as well as by the apparent beauty of natural objects.

But, ere we say more of our Author's work, we must say something of the man himself; and, for the materials for the brief account (which follows) of his life, we are indebted to a 'Memoir' of him, written by 'An Admirer of his character and works,' and published in 1851—at Lympington, by W. L. Galpine, and, in London, by Hamilton and Adams. This memoir only professes to give an outline of Gilpin's life, and it naturally expresses regret that materials for a fuller biography were not easily accessible, owing, mainly, to the fact that the Author of the 'Forest Scenery' never kept a diary, 'nor left any papers behind him from which interesting particulars could be gathered of himself.' Here, however, as we have said, we purpose to give a few details only of his life and work.

William Gilpin was born on the 4th of June, 1724, at Scaleby Castle, near Carlisle, where his family had lived for three generations. His father was Captain John Bernard Gilpin, a lineal

descendant of the Rev. Bernard Gilpin, famous in the history of the Protestant Reformation as 'The Apostle of the North.' Of the youth of our Author very little is known. Having been designed by his parents for the ministry, he was sent to Queen's College, Oxford, where he graduated as a Bachelor of Arts, November 24th, 1744. He was ordained two years later, namely, in October, 1746; and the same year was appointed a stipendiary curate by the Rev. James Farish, vicar of Irthington, a parish adjoining his native village of Scaleby. He occupied this curacy for less than two years, and, in May, 1748, he proceeded to Oxford and took his M.A. degree. During the four following years he held, at least, two curacies, one in the diocese of Winchester, and the other in that of London; but, curiously enough, his biographer has been unable to ascertain the names of the parishes in which these appointments were held. In 1752 Gilpin gave up the Church for a time, and accepted an appointment as principal assistant in the school of the Rev. Daniel Sanxay, at Cheam, in Surrey—afterwards succeeding, on the retirement of Mr.

Sanxay, to the entire control of the school. Speaking of him in this capacity his biographer says:—‘Religion was the foundation-stone on which he built the fabric of all instruction that he imparted to his pupils, while he instilled into their minds the noblest sentiments that are deducible from moral principles of the highest nature. On such a superstructure he could hardly fail of success, more particularly so when, to it, he added a gentleness of manners that won the confidence of his pupils, whom he trained to virtue by example tutored with love and disciplined by kindness.’ In the same year in which he took up his residence at Cheam, Gilpin married an orphan niece of his uncle. His marriage he afterwards described as one of almost uninterrupted happiness. Two sons and two daughters were born of this marriage. Of these, the daughters both died whilst young; one of the sons emigrated to America, and the other—William, the youngest—entered the Church.

During the year 1770, and subsequently, our Author undertook numerous tours through various parts of England, Scotland, and Wales. His bio-

grapher says :—‘ These tours were made for the purpose of admiring the works of creation ; and with a view of seeing the most picturesque scenery in this kingdom, he visited those spots that are proverbial for their beauty. One of the leading features in Gilpin’s character was his very ardent love of the works of Nature. His numerous writings on picturesque beauty demonstrate that, from the blade of grass to the towering Elm, from the level plain to the stupendous mountain, from the running rivulet to the majestic ocean, his attention was directed to investigate their beauties, not merely with the curiosity of the naturalist, but with the reverence of a man who beholds all creation “ prompt with remembrance of a present God.” ’ Whilst on his tours Gilpin adopted the plan of sketching any scenery which struck him as being remarkable, and he thus made a collection of drawings for illustrating his works on picturesque beauty.

In 1777 he resigned his school at Cheam, having, at the end of the twenty-five years during which he had held it, realized a sum of ten thousand pounds. In the same year one of his old pupils—William

Mitford, the historian of Greece—presented him, as a mark of esteem, to the living of Boldre, in the New Forest, near Lymington. There he remained until the close of his life, and it was there he wrote nearly the whole of his works, extending to twenty-four volumes. His writings on picturesque beauty were all written and published during his residence in that quiet woodland village.

Of Gilpin, as a preacher of the Gospel, his biographer gives us the following picture:—  
‘Favoured by nature with a commanding person, dignified manners, and a deep, sonorous voice, and blessed with an education which gave him all the classic proprieties and simple grace of public speaking, his mode of saying the liturgy, reading the Scriptures, and preaching was almost inimitable. When he said the former, the beauty of its composition appeared to have acquired additional solemnity from the full melody of his voice, and the deep emotion of his solemn and forcible manner; while reading the Scriptures, in reciting either their awful predictions, or in delivering their terrible denunciations, he seemed to be warmed with a portion of their own fire, or



to have received a spark of their inspiration. His style of preaching was most impressive. On ascending the pulpit every eye and ear was rivetted with attention, as with a depth of feeling and power of language of the most impressive nature, he delivered the Gospel message in all its fulness, and in all the plenitude of its divine mission ; but, nevertheless, in words so plain as to be distinctly understood by the most unlettered of his humble flock.' Not less earnest were his private ministrations, for there were no cottagers within the bounds of his extensive parish, who failed to find in their pastor a ready sympathizer in all their troubles and sorrows.

In 1791 he erected a school at a cost of 400*l.*, the money having been set apart for this excellent purpose out of the profits of his publications. Eleven years afterwards he determined to endow this school, and, in order to enable him to do so, he sold a number of his drawings, for which he obtained a sum of 1200*l.*, investing the amount in the public funds. This sum was added to a small amount which had been previously invested with a similar object, and was

further augmented by the proceeds of a sale of his drawings—which, in accordance with his will, took place immediately after his death, and produced a sum of 1625*l.*—the entire amount invested bringing in an annual revenue of 87*l.* ‘Gilpin’s School’ is now amalgamated with a general school, established in Boldre for that and an adjoining parish.

We must now bring our brief notice of Gilpin and his work to a close. The death of this faithful minister, generous benefactor, and delightful writer occurred, as we have seen, in 1804. His widow survived him by only three years, and both were buried in Boldre churchyard, beneath the shadow of the Field Maple, to which he has referred in his ‘Forest Scenery.’ The inscription on the joint grave is as follows :—‘ In a quiet mansion beneath this stone, secure from the afflictions and still more dangerous enjoyments of life, lye the remains of William Gilpin, sometime vicar of this parish, together with the remains of Margaret, his wife. After living above fifty years in happy union, they hope to be raised in God’s due time, through the atonement of a Blessed

Redeemer for their repented transgressions, to a state of joyful immortality. There it will be a new joy to meet several of their good neighbours, who lye scattered in these sacred precincts around them.' To this inscription, suggested by Gilpin himself, is added :—' He died April 5th, 1804, at the age of eighty. She died July 14th, 1807, at the age of eighty-two.'

In 1842, a subscription was raised in order to place a monumental tablet to Gilpin in Boldre church. The monument is placed on the north side of the church, and the inscription upon it bears testimony to the fact that the author of the ' Forest Scenery ' was ' a man eminent for the accomplishments of his mind, the purity of his heart, and the excellence and simplicity of his life ;' and it records that the monument was dedicated to his memory by his friends and parishioners ' in grateful remembrance of his faithful administration of the pastoral office, and of his munificence as the founder of the school in this parish, for the education of the children of the day labourers of Boldre.'

From the man to his writings, and, of these, we

shall notice, here, those only which have made him famous. The first of these was published in 1782, and was entitled 'Observations on the River Wye, and several parts of South Wales, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the summer of the year 1770.' The commendation of the poet Gray had encouraged Gilpin to put this book before the public. Its success gave him still further encouragement. In 1787 he published 'Observations relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the year 1772, on several parts of England, particularly the mountains and lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland.' In 1789 appeared 'Observations on several parts of Great Britain, particularly the Highlands of Scotland, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the year 1776.' The next work in the order of publication was his 'Forest Scenery,' the date and particulars of which we have already given. In 1792 Gilpin published 'Three Essays; on picturesque beauty, on picturesque travel, and on sketching landscape, with a poem on landscape painting.' The last volume published before his death was entitled 'Observations on the Western

parts of England, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, to which is added a few remarks on the picturesque beauties of the Isle of Wight.' In 1804, the same year in which he died, his trustees published for the benefit of his school at Boldre, in conformance with the Author's will, a volume entitled 'Observations on the Coast of Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in the summer of the year 1774.' Another volume, published in 1809 by Gilpin's trustees, was entitled 'Observations on several parts of the counties of Cambridge, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex; also on several parts of North Wales, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty; in two tours—the former made in the year 1769, and the latter in the year 1773.' These works on picturesque beauty were illustrated by the pencil of the Author, and produced as aquatinta engravings by Mr. Alken, who, in the last century, had acquired a considerable reputation by his skill in executing drawings by that process.

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The PRESENT EDITION comprises the whole of

that portion of Gilpin's work on picturesque beauty, devoted to general forest scenery. It should be explained that under the general heading of 'Remarks on forest scenery and other woodland views,' the Author included chapters on 'forest history,' as well as a history and description of the New Forest in Hampshire, as it was in the last century. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that comes properly within the category of 'Forest Scenery' is included in the present volume, which takes the reader *seriatim* through the first 16 sections of the Third Edition of 1808. All the important corrections made by Gilpin subsequently to the publication of the First Edition in 1791, appear for the first time in a New Edition after a lapse of seventy-one years—for, as already stated, Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's Edition of 1834, was printed from the unrevised issue of 1791.

We confess to feelings of unusual pleasure in making the present endeavour to bring again into prominence, after so long an interval of time, one of the most delightful books in the English language. We confess, too, to the feelings of surprise which we experienced on discovering that no

edition worthy of the man and of the book had been presented to English readers for nearly three quarters of a century, notwithstanding the reputation which the work had made, and the interest and attraction which it still possessed for all lovers of Nature. We shall never forget our own pleasure when we made our first acquaintance with the 'Forest Scenery.' The book had for us the charm of romance, and we turned page after page with absorbing interest. Do we mistake the feelings of English readers if we venture to think that wherever our language is spoken, 'Gilpin's Forest Scenery' will be welcomed—in England, in our colonies, and in America? for its 'observations,' couched in a style pre-eminent for its Anglo-Saxon simplicity and beauty, are redolent of the forest air, and will surely give pleasure and afford delight, wherever, in the wide world, exists an Englishman's love for rolling wood and forest lawn.

We would add that our publishers have heartily co-operated with us in the endeavour to make this book worthy of the man who wrote it—for no expense has been spared in the preparation of the present Edition.

For ourselves we have the pleasant reflection that our editorial labour has been a labour of love. And here it will be appropriate to state that the utmost care has been taken in the work of supplementing the original text with such notes of explanation as were necessary to bring the book up to date, whilst we have given a verbatim transcription of Gilpin's work with all his foot-notes, quotations, and italicised words and expressions,—deeming it our duty to interpose our own comments as seldom as might be. The original text is in large, and our editorial notes in smaller, type. For the information conveyed in these notes we are indebted to the courtesy of a large number of correspondents. Amongst these our obligations are especially due to Lieut.-Colonel Esdaile, of Burley Manor, one of the verderers of our beautiful New Forest, who has rendered us material assistance in the prosecution of our inquiries—sparing no labour to promote an object in which he heartily sympathizes, and working 'for the very love of the thing.'

*London, August, 1879.*



## THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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BOLDRE CHURCH, which, for twenty-seven years, was the scene of Gilpin's public ministrations, forms the subject of the frontispiece, which is engraved from an admirable drawing very kindly made for us by Mrs. Lister Kay. 'Gilpin's Maple' is seen on the right, by the church, and under its shadow is his grave. Reference to this famous tree will be found at page 82, where Gilpin says, 'One of the largest Maples I have seen stands in the churchyard of Boldre, in New Forest.' Our especial acknowledgments are due to Mrs. Lister Kay for this drawing, for, during two visits which she made to the churchyard for the purpose of her sketch, the rain, on both occasions, came down with unceasing persistency. But the artist worked, perseveringly, under an umbrella, for she had to leave England for a three months' tour

abroad, and time pressed. Mr. James D. Cooper is the engraver, and his work, we think, has done full justice to the skill of the fair delineator.

The full-page illustrations, consisting chiefly of landscapes, interspersed throughout the volume, have all been redrawn from the subjects furnished by Gilpin himself. To the superintendence of this work—most essential to a worthy reproduction of the ‘Forest Scenery’—we have devoted the utmost care and attention. We have already stated that Gilpin illustrated his own books, and that the illustrations were executed in aquatinta. An excellent description of the character of the drawings is given by Gilpin’s biographer, who says (page 219 of the Memoir)—‘His productions as an artist are of no ordinary merit, and are principally distinguished for their peculiar style of composition, in which he conveys the general idea of an object, without giving its specific delineations. The absence of *portraiture* is supplied by the *picturesque*. Hence, none of his drawings are minutely finished, but are mere spirited sketches.’

Looked at, at a distance, and without minute

inspection, there is a charm in these rude sketches—something which strongly touches the imagination. But neither the drawing nor engraving will compare with the work of the present day. The aquatint, however, which overspreads them, gives them a peculiarly striking appearance. Of the effect of this colouring, Gilpin himself says :—‘ As some people, not much versed in matters of this kind, have conceived the tint, with which these aquatinta drawings are stained, to be an attempt to colour after Nature, I would suggest that nothing less is intended. Some *little* idea of the glow of sunset may be given by it ; and this is attempted only in one or two prints. In all the rest, the design of this wash is only to take off the glaring rawness of white paper, and to harmonize, by a mellow tint, the unpleasant opposition of black and white.’ The ‘glaring rawness’ of white paper and the ‘unpleasant opposition of black and white’ are not to be discerned in the good drawing and engraving of the present day. Hence, though, at first, we felt inclined to reproduce Gilpin’s landscapes in *facsimile*—and this could have been accom-

plished in two ways—we considered, on reflection, that it would be doing fuller justice to his work to bring in the best aids of the artist and wood engraver, by supplying—whilst producing the actual subjects furnished by Gilpin, so characteristic of the spirit and of the charm of his drawings in general—the minutiae of modern artistic work, and the best style of modern wood engraving. It has, therefore, been our most anxious care to see, that in all the details of Gilpin's pictures, the artist should supply what their originator had omitted from his sketches—the filling in of the landscape foregrounds—the proper drawing of the trees and due attention to perspective, to the effects of light and shade, and to the incidental and suggestive beauty added to the scenes by the presence of clouds in the sky—the substitution, in short, of the most skilful artistic work of the present day for the conventional drawing and engraving of the eighteenth century.

Artist and engraver entered into the work *con amore*, and they have done their utmost to carry out our suggestions and wishes to the letter. We trust that the result may be considered successful. With the exception of the ten figures, illustrating

the spray of trees, which are engraved from photographs of Gilpin's figures, all the illustrations of the Author of the 'Forest Scenery' have been re-drawn by Mr. Theobald Carreras, and engraved by Mr. J. D. Cooper.

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BOOK I.



TREES AS SINGLE OBJECTS.



# GILPIN'S FOREST SCENERY.


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Trees as single Objects.

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## SECTION I.

### PICTURESQUE BEAUTY OF TREES.

T is no exaggerated praise to call a tree the *grandest* and most *beautiful* of all the productions of the earth. In the former of these epithets nothing contends with it; for we consider rocks and mountains as part of the earth itself. And though, among inferior plants, shrubs, and flowers, there is great beauty, yet when we consider that these minuter productions are chiefly beautiful as *individuals*, and are not

adapted to form the arrangement of *composition* in *landscape*, nor to receive the *effects of light and shade*, they must give place in point of *beauty*—of *picturesque beauty*, at least, which we are here considering—to the form and foliage and ramification of the tree. Thus the splendid tints of the insect, however beautiful, must yield to the elegance and proportion of animals, which range in a higher class.


With animal life I should not set the tree in competition. The shape, the different-coloured fur, the varied and spirited attitudes, the character, and motion which strike us in the animal creation, are certainly beyond still life in its most pleasing appearance. I should only observe with regard to trees, that Nature has been kinder to them in point of *variety* than even to its *living forms*. Though every animal is distinguished from its fellow by some little variation of colour, character, or shape, yet in all the *larger parts*, in the body and limbs, the resemblance is generally exact. In trees, it is just the reverse: the *smaller parts*—the spray, the leaves, the blossom, and the seed—are the same in all trees of the same kind,

while the larger parts are wholly different. You never see two Oaks with an equal number of limbs, the same kind of head, and twisted in the same form : and it is from these larger parts that the *most beautiful varieties* result. However, as *variety* is not alone sufficient to give superiority to the tree, we give the preference, on the whole, to animal life.



## SECTION II.

### CHARACTERS OF TREES.

REES when young, like striplings, shoot into taper forms. There is a lightness and an airiness in them which is pleasing; but they do not spread, and receive their just proportions, till they have attained their full growth.

There is as much difference, too, in trees (I mean in trees of the same kind) in point of beauty, as there is in human figures. The limbs of some are set on awkwardly; their trunks are disproportioned, and their whole form is displeasing. The same rules which establish elegance in other objects, establish it in these. There must be the same harmony of parts, the

same sweeping line, the same contrast, the same ease and freedom. A bough, indeed, may issue from its trunk at right angles, and yet elegantly, as it frequently does in the Oak; but it must immediately form some contrasting sweep, or the junction will be awkward.

All forms, that are *unnatural*, displease. A tree lopped into a may-pole, as you generally see in the hedgerows of Surrey and some other counties, is disgusting. Clipped Yews, Lime hedges, and pollards, for the same reason, are disagreeable: and yet I have sometimes seen a pollard produce a good effect, when Nature has been suffered, for some years, to bring it again into form: but I never saw a good effect produced by a pollard on which some single stem was left to grow into a tree. The stem is of a different growth: it is disproportioned, and always unites awkwardly with the trunk.

Our Author here speaks in the character of a true lover of Nature, expressing his dislike of the hideous practice of 'trimming' trees into unnatural shapes—a practice which was much more common in the last century than it is at present. Even now, however, the art of topiary—





A pollard, on which a single stem has been left to grow into a tree.

[Page 8.]

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which, curiously enough, was amongst the Romans considered the highest and most valuable accomplishment of the gardener—still finds some admirers in this country. But it is easy to conceive how repugnant it must have been to a man who had passed the greater part of his life amongst some of the wildest and most beautiful scenes of Nature.—Ed.

Not only all forms that are unnatural, displease ; but even natural forms, when they bear a resemblance to art, unless indeed these forms are characteristic of the species. A Cypress pleases in a conic form ; but if we should see an Oak or an Elm growing in that, or any other constrained shape, we should take offence. In the Cypress, Nature adapts the spray and branches to the form of the tree. In the Oak and Elm, the spray and branches produce, naturally, a different character.

*Lightness* also is a characteristic of beauty in a tree : for though there are beautiful trees of a heavy, as well as of a light, form, yet their extremities must in some parts be separated, and hang with a degree of looseness from the fullness of the foliage which occupies the middle of the

tree, or the whole will only be a large bush. Such is the Horse Chestnut, the form of which is commonly unpleasing.\* From position, indeed, and contrast, heaviness, though in itself a deformity, may be of singular use in the composition both of natural and of artificial landscape.

A tree also must be *well balanced* to be beautiful. It may have form, and it may have lightness, and yet lose all its effect by wanting a proper poise. The bole must appear to support the branches. We do not desire to see it supporting its burden with the perpendicular firmness of a column. An easy sweep is always agreeable: but, at the same time, it should not be such a sweep as discovers one side plainly overbalanced.

On bleak sea coasts trees generally take an unbalanced form: and, indeed, in general, some foreign cause must operate to occasion it; for Nature, working freely, is as much inclined to balance a tree upon its trunk, as an animal upon its legs.

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\* See page 88.—Ed.



[Page 15.]

An unbalanced tree, bending over a road.



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And yet, in some circumstances, I have seen beauty arise even from an unbalanced tree; but it must arise from some peculiar situation which gives it a local propriety. A tree, for instance, hanging from a rock, though totally unpoised, may be beautiful: or it may have a good effect when we see it bending over a road, because it corresponds with its peculiar situation. We do not, in these cases, admire it as a tree, but as the adjunct of an effect, the beauty of which does not give the eye leisure to attend to the deformity of the instrument through which the effect is produced.


Without these requisites, therefore, *form*, *lightness*, and a *proper balance*, no tree can have that *species of beauty* which we call *picturesque*.





### SECTION III.

#### SOURCES OF PICTURESQUENESS IN TREES.

 ESIDES these requisites of beauty in a tree, there are other things of an *adventitious kind* which often add great beauty to it. And here I cannot help lamenting the capricious nature of *picturesque ideas*.

In many instances they run counter to *utility*, and in nothing more than in the adventitious beauties ascribed to trees. Many of these are derived from the injuries the tree receives, or the diseases to which it is subject. Mr. Lawson, a naturalist of the last age, thus enumerates them. 'How many forests and woods,' says he, 'have we, wherein you shall have, for one lively, thriving tree, four, nay some-

times twenty-four, evil thriving, rotten, and dying trees: what rottenness! what hollowness! what dead arms! withered tops! curtailed trunks! what loads of mosses! drooping boughs and dying branches, shall you see everywhere.' \*

Now all these maladies, which our distressed naturalist bemoans with so much feeling, are often capital sources of picturesque beauty, both in the wild scenes of Nature and in artificial landscape.

What is more beautiful, for instance, on a rugged foreground, than an old tree with a *hollow trunk*? or with a *dead arm*, a *drooping bough*, or a *dying branch*? all which phrases I apprehend are nearly synonymous.

From the *withered top*, also, great use and beauty may result in the composition of landscape, when we wish to break the regularity of some continued line which we would not entirely hide.

By the *curtailed trunk* I suppose Mr. Lawson means a tree whose principal stem has been shattered by winds, or some other accident, while the lower part of it is left in vigour. This is also

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\* See Lawson's *Orchard*.



A withered top, hiding the upper part of a landscape.

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A curtailed trunk, hiding the lower part of a landscape.

[Page 18.]



a beautiful circumstance, and its application equally useful in landscape. The *withered top* just breaks the lines of an eminence! the *curtailed trunk* discovers the whole; while the lateral branches, which are vigorous and healthy in both, hide any part of the lower landscape which, wanting variety, is better veiled.

For the use and beauty of the *withered top* and *curtailed trunk* we need only appeal to the works of Salvator Rosa, in many of which we find them of great use. Salvator had often occasion for an object on his foregrounds as large as the trunk of a tree, when the whole tree together in its full state of grandeur would have been an incumbrance to him. A young tree, or a bush, might probably have served his purpose with regard to *composition*; but such dwarfs and striplings could not have preserved the dignity of his subject like the ruins of a noble tree. These splendid remnants of decaying grandeur speak to the imagination in a style of eloquence which the stripling cannot reach; they record the history of some storm, some blast of lightning, or other great event, which transfers its grand ideas to the landscape,

and, in the representation of elevated subjects, assists the sublime.

Whether these maladies in trees ever produce beauty in *adorned Nature*, I much doubt. Kent \* was hardy enough even to *plant a withered tree*; but the error was too glaring for imitation. Objects in every mode of composition should harmonize; and all we venture to assert, is, that these maladies are then only sources of beauty, either in the wild scenes of Nature or in artificial landscape, when they are the appendages of *some particular mode of composition*.

The planting of a withered tree, though seldom, if ever, attempted by modern gardeners, would be perfectly consistent in any portion of a wooded estate to which it was desired to give the aspect of a forest, provided the ground was of sufficient extent. But in such a case the size of the tree would need to be proportioned to the living trees surrounding it. It is, in fact, a common practice to plant old tree stumps upon lawns, for the reception of ferns and mosses; for a lawn, in such a case, may be said to represent a forest glade in which one may

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\* William Kent, who is regarded as the founder of English landscape gardening, was born in Yorkshire in 1684 and died in 1748.—Ed.



often see the graceful fronds of the flowerless plants waving from the rotten and curtailed boles of ancient giants of the wood. When, indeed, we strive to imitate Nature, we cannot too closely follow her teachings.—Ed.

The last, and most beautiful, of those diseases which Mr. Lawson ascribes to trees, is *moss*. This, it is true, is one of Nature's minutiae, and, in painting, touches not the great parts, *composition* and *effects*. Nor is it of use in mere drawing. But, in coloured landscape, it is surely a very beautiful object of imitation. The variety of mosses—the green, which tinges the trunk of the Beech; the brimstone-coloured and black, which stain the Oak; and the yellow, which is frequently found on the Elm and Ash, are among the most beautiful of those tints which embellish the bark of trees.

I have often stood with admiration before an old forest Oak, examining the various tints which have enriched its furrowed stem. The genuine bark of an Oak is of an ash colour, though it is difficult to distinguish any part of it from the mosses that overspread it: for no Oak, I suppose, was ever without a greater or a less proportion of these picturesque appendages. The lower parts,

about the roots, are often possessed by that green, velvet moss, which in a still greater degree commonly occupies the bole of the Beech, though the beauty and brilliancy of it lose much when in decay. As the trunk rises you see the brimstone colour taking possession in patches. Of this there are two principal kinds—a smooth sort, which spreads like a scurf over the bark, and a rougher sort, which hangs in little rich knots and fringes. I call it a brimstone hue, by way of general distinction : but it sometimes inclines to an olive, and sometimes to a light green. Intermixed with these mosses you often find a species perfectly white. Before I was acquainted with it I have sometimes thought the tree whitewashed. Here and there a touch of it gives a lustre to the trunk, and has its effect : yet, on the whole, it is a nuisance ; for, as it generally begins to thrive when the other mosses begin to wither (as if the *decaying* bark were its proper nutriment), it is rarely accompanied with any of the more beautiful species of its kind ; and, when thus unsupported, always disgusts. This white moss, by the way, is esteemed a certain mark of age ; and, when it

prevails in any degree, is a clear indication that the vigour of the tree is declining. We find, also, another species of moss, of a dark brown colour, inclining nearly to black; another of an ashy colour, and another of a dingy yellow. We may observe, also, touches of red, and sometimes, but rarely, a bright yellow, which is like a gleam of sunshine; and in many trees you will see one species growing upon another—the knotted, brimstone-coloured fringe clinging to a lighter species, or the black softening into red. Strictly speaking, many of these excrescences, which I have mentioned under the general name of *mosses*, should be distinguished by other names. All those, particularly, which cling close to the bark of trees, and have a leprous, scabby appearance, are classed, I believe, by botanists, under the name of *lichens*: others are called *liver-worts*. But all these excrescences, under whatever names distinguished, add a great richness to trees; and when they are blended harmoniously, as is generally the case, the rough and furrowed trunk of an old Oak, adorned with these pleasing appendages, is an object which will long detain the picturesque eye.

But, besides the appearance of moss upon the *trunks* of trees, it creeps among the *branches*, and sometimes takes possession, not only of the larger boughs, but even of the smaller spray. In winter this has often a fine effect, when the whole tree, turned into a beautiful piece of straw-coloured coral, appears against a dark wood, or some other background, which gives it relief. In a strong sunshine, too, it is beautiful, when the light, straw-coloured tints contrast with the shadows formed by the twisting of the boughs, which are sometime still further deepened by some of the darker mosses.

Thus the maladies of trees are greatly subservient to the uses of the pencil. The foliage is the *dress*; and these are the *ornaments*. Even the poet will sometimes deign to array his tree with these picturesque ornaments. I am always glad of his authority, when I can have it: and I have seen a poetical Oak garnished in a way that the painter might copy from. In general, however, the poet is not, like the painter, *uniform* in his admiration of these pleasing appendages. If at one time he admires them with the painter,

and ranks them among the picturesque beauties of Nature, at another he sides with the woodman, and brushes them away. Nay, I have known him conjure up some mighty agent, as guardian of his woods, who cries out,—

‘From Jove I am the Power  
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower.  
I nurse my saplings tall ; and cleanse their rind  
From vegetating filth of every kind.  
And all my plants I save from nightly ill  
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill.’

Besides Mr. Lawson’s catalogue of maladies we might enumerate others, which are equally the sources of beauty. The *blasted tree* has often a fine effect both in natural and in artificial landscape. In some scenes it is almost essential. When the dreary heath is spread before the eye, and ideas of wildness and desolation are required, what more suitable accompaniment can be imagined than the blasted Oak—ragged, scathed, and leafless—shooting its peeled, white branches athwart the gathering blackness of some rising storm ?

Thus the poet treats it—

'As when heaven's fire  
Hath scathed the forest Oak or mountain Pine,  
With singed top its stately growth, though bare,  
Stands on the blasted heath.'

*Ivy* is another mischief incident to trees, which has a good effect. It gives great richness to an old trunk, both by its stem, which often winds round it in thick, hairy, irregular volumes, and by its leaf, which either decks the furrowed bark, or creeps among the branches, or hangs carelessly from them. In all these circumstances it unites with the mosses, and other furniture of the tree, in adorning and enriching it. But when it gathers into a heavy body, which is often the case, it becomes rather a deformity. In summer, indeed, its bushiness is lost in the foliage of the tree; but in winter, *naked branches* make a disagreeable appearance staring from a *thick bush*. And yet, in autumn, I have seen a beautiful contrast between a bush of *Ivy*, which had completely invested the head of a pollard Oak, and the dark-brown tint of the withered leaves, which still held possession of the branches. But this was a mere accidental effect; for you may see many pollard Oaks with withered leaves, and



A blasted tree, on a heath.

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covered with Ivy, and yet not see the tints so happily arranged as to produce an effect.

We have frequently seen the trunks of deciduous trees in winter densely covered with Ivy; but we have never been able to regard such an appearance—even when the climbing evergreen had gathered into ‘a heavy body’—as a ‘deformity.’ Even Gilpin, it will be noticed, half apologizes for venturing so to regard it. By some accident the Ivy clusters may have assumed an unsightly form; but, to our mind, the *natural* growth of this delightful plant is always beautiful: and the situations it assumes are—with regard to every object in the forest around which it clings—always picturesque.—Ed.

In the spring also we sometimes have a pleasing appearance of a similar kind. About the end of April, when the foliage of the Oak is just beginning to expand, its varied tints are often delightfully contrasted with the deep green of an Ivy bush which has overspread the body and larger limbs of the tree: and the contrast has been still more beautiful when the limbs are covered, as we sometimes see them, with tufts of brimstone-coloured moss.\*

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\* See page 27, where Gilpin has already explained that in the term ‘moss’ he includes lichens and liver-worts.—Ed.

All these plants are *parasitical*, as the botanist expressively calls them. The tribes of mosses, lichens, and liver-worts make no pretence to independence. They are absolute retainers. Not one of them gets his own livelihood, nor takes the least step towards it. The Ivy indeed is less dependent. He has a root of his own, and draws nourishment from the ground: but his character is misrepresented, if his little feelers have not other purposes than merely that of showing an attachment to his potent neighbour. Shakespeare roundly asserts he makes a property of him:—

‘ He was  
The Ivy, which had hid my princely trunk,  
And suck'd my verdure out.’

Gilpin's suggestion and Shakespeare's assumption are both, we think, correct, notwithstanding the opinion of Sir Dick Lauder, the first Editor of the ‘Forest Scenery,’ and of several modern botanists. We believe that the ‘little feelers’ of the Ivy are veritable *roots*, and that, as such, they draw nourishment from the crevices—whether the crannies of rocks or walls, or the fissures in tree trunks—into which they insinuate themselves. In this opinion we are supported by authorities of no less weight than Sir Joseph Hooker and Mr. Shirley Hibberd. The

latter, in his delightful 'Monograph of the Ivy,' discusses the subject at considerable length; and, amongst other reasons for his belief, states the very conclusive fact that if the root of an Ivy that has climbed upon a wall or tree be cut off close to the ground, the plant *continues to live and thrive*!—Ed.

Besides this parasitical tribe the painter admires another class of humble plants, which live entirely on their own means; yet, spreading out their little tendrils, beg the protection of the great; whom if they encumber, as they certainly do in a degree, they enrich with a variety of beautiful flowers and scarlet berries. Many of these, though classed among weeds, have great beauty. Among them, the black and white Brionies are distinguished. The berries, also, of many of these little plants are variously coloured, in the different states of their growth, yellow, red, and orange. All these rich touches, however small, produce their effect. Another elegant climber, called *Traveller's joy*, produces indeed no berries; but its feathered seeds are ornamental. The wild Honeysuckle also comes within this class; and though, in winding its

spiral coil, it may compress the young tree too tightly, and, in some degree, injure its circulation, yet it fully compensates the injury by the beauty and fragrancý of its flowers :—

‘ With clasping tendrils it invests the branch,  
Else unadorn’d, with many a gay festoon,  
And fragrant chaplet ; recompensing well  
The strength it borrows with the grace it lends.’

Under warm suns, where Vines are the offspring of Nature, nothing can be more beautiful than the forest tree, adorned with their twisting branches, hanging from bough to bough, and laden with fruit,—

‘ The clusters clear  
Half through the foliage seen.’

In the road between Pisa and Florence, Dr. Smollet informs us, the country is often thus adorned. The Vines are not planted in rows, and propped with sticks, as in France and the county of Nice, but twine naturally around the hedge-row trees, which they almost cover with their foliage and fruit. Extending from tree to tree, they exhibit beautiful festoons of leaves, tendrils and swelling clusters, black and white, hanging

down from every bough in the most luxuriant and romantic abundance.\*

Among the most beautiful appendages of this hanging kind, which we have in England, is the Hop. In cultivation it is disagreeable : but, in its rude natural state, twisting carelessly round the branches of trees, I know not whether it is not as beautiful as the Vine. Its leaf is similar ; and though the bunches of hop, beautiful as they are, and fragrant, are not equal to the clusters of the Vine, yet it is a more accommodating plant, hangs more loosely, and is less extravagant in its growth.

In artificial landscape indeed, where the subject is sublime, these appendages are of little value. Such trifling ornaments the scene rejects. The rough Oak, in the dignity of its simple form, adorns the foreground better. But in festive, or Bacchanalian subjects (if such subjects are ever proper for description) when the sportive nymphs and satyrs take their repose at noon, or gambol in the shade of evening, nothing can more beautifully adorn their retreat, or more characteristically mark it, than these pendent plants, parti-

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\* Smollet's Travels, vol. ii. page 46.

cularly the mantling Vine, hanging, as I have here described it, in rich festoons from bough to bough.

The rooting also of trees is a circumstance on which their beauty greatly depends. I know not whether it is reckoned among the maladies of a tree, to heave his root above the soil. Old trees often do. But whether it be a malady or not, it is certainly very picturesque. The more they raise the ground around them, and the greater number of radical knobs they heave up, the firmer they seem to establish their footing upon the earth, and the more dignity they assume. An *old tree* rising tamely from a *smooth surface* (as we often find it covered with earth in artificial ground), loses half its effect: it does not appear as the lord of the soil, but to be stuck into it, and would have a still worse effect on canvas than it has in Nature.

Pliny gives us an account of the roots of certain ancient Oaks in the Hercynian forest, which appears rather extravagant, but which, I can easily conceive, may be true. These roots, he says, heave the ground upwards, in many places, into lofty mounts; and in other parts, where the earth does not follow them, the bare roots rise as

high as the lower branches, and, twisting round, form, in many places, portals so wide, that a man and horse may ride upright through them.\*—This indeed is somewhat higher than picturesque beauty requires; it borders rather on the fantastic. In *general*, however, the higher the roots are, the more picturesque they appear.

To the adventitious beauties of trees, we may add their *susceptibility of motion*, which is capable, at least, of being a considerable source of beauty. The waving heads of some, and the undulation of others, give a continual variety to their forms. In Nature the motion of trees is certainly a circumstance of great beauty. Shakespeare formerly made the observation:—

‘Things in motion sooner catch the eye,  
Than what stirs not.’

To the painter, also, the *moving tree* affords often a piece of useful machinery, when he wishes to express the agitation of air. In this light it may even be considered as an objection to trees of firmer branches, as the Oak, that their resistance to every breath of air deprives them, at least, of one source of beauty, and subjects them to be

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\* Nat. Hist., Book xvi. chap.

sooner *gotten by heart*, if I may so phrase it, than other trees ; which, yielding to the pressure, are every instant assuming new modifications.


From the motion of the tree, we have also the pleasing circumstance of the *chequered shade*, formed under it by the dancing of the sunbeams among its playing leaves. This circumstance, though not so much calculated for picturesque use (as its beauty arises chiefly from its motion), is yet very amusing in nature ; and may also be introduced in painting, when the tree is at rest. But it is one of those circumstances, which requires a very artful pencil. In its very nature it opposes the grand principle of massing light and shade. However, if it be brought in properly, and not suffered to glare, it may have its beauty. But, whatever becomes of this circumstance in painting, it is very capable of being pleasingly wrought up in poetry.

'The chequer'd earth seems restless as a flood  
Brush'd by the winds. So sportive is the light  
Shot through the boughs ; it dances, as they dance,  
Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,  
And dark'ning, and enlightening (as the leaves  
Play wanton) every part.'



## SECTION IV.

### DESCRIPTIVE ENUMERATION OF TREES.



HAVING thus examined trees in a *general view*, I shall now particularize and endeavour to explain the beauties and defects of their *several kinds*, as they regard *landscape*. I shall first consider them as *individuals*, and afterwards in *composition*.

Trees range under two general heads—*deciduous* and *ever-green*. In this order I shall take them, confining my remarks to those, chiefly of both kinds, which are of English growth, whether native or naturalized.

Among deciduous trees, the *Oak* presents itself first. It is a happiness to the lovers of the

picturesque that this noble plant is as useful as it is beautiful. From the utility of the Oak they derive this advantage, that it is everywhere found. In the choice, indeed, of its soil it is rather delicate. For though it is rather undistinguishing during its early growth, while its horizontal fibres straggle about the surface of the earth, yet, when its tap-root begins to enter the depths of the soil, perhaps no tree is nicer in its discriminations. If its constitution be not suited here, it may multiply its progeny indeed and produce a thriving copse; but the puny race will never rise to lordly dignity in the forest, nor furnish navies to command the ocean.\*

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\* How quickly the Oak vegetates in a soil it likes, may be seen from the following instance :—An acorn was sown at Beckett, the seat of Lord Barrington, on the day of his birth in 1717. In November, 1790, it contained 95 feet of timber, which at 2*s.* per foot would sell for 9*l.* 10*s.* The top was valued at about 1*l.* 15*s.* The girth, at 5 feet from the ground, was about half an inch more than 8 feet. The increase of girth, in the two last years, was 4 inches and a half. It grows in rich land, worth 1*l.* 5*s.* an acre. [The present Viscount Barrington informs us that this tree, known as the 'King's Oak,' is still living, and has 'a fine straight stem:' and that its girth, as ascertained by the Rev. G. W. Murray, Vicar of Shrivenham, was, on May 27, 1879, 13 feet at 5 feet from the ground.—Ed.]

The particular, and most valued, qualities of the Oak are *hardness* and *toughness*. Shakespeare uses two epithets to express these qualities, which are, perhaps, stronger than any we can find.

‘Thou rather with thy sharp and sulph’rous bolt  
Split’st the *unwedgeable*, and *gnarled* Oak,  
Than the soft Myrtle.’

Many kinds of wood are *harder*, as Box and Ebony; many kinds are *tougher*, as Yew and Ash; but it is supposed that no species of wood, at least no species of timber, is possessed of both these qualities together in so great a degree as British Oak. Almost all arts and manufactures are indebted to it; but, in ship-building and bearing burdens, its elasticity and strength are applied to most advantage. I mention these *mechanic uses* only because some of its *chief beauties* are connected with them. Thus it is not the erect, stately tree that is always the most useful in ship-building; but more often the crooked one, forming short turns and elbows, which the shipwrights and carpenters commonly call *knee-timber*. This, too, is generally the most picturesque. Nor is it the straight, tall stem, whose fibres run in parallel

lines, that is the most useful in bearing burdens : but that whose sinews are twisted and spirally combined. This too is the most picturesque. Trees under these circumstances generally take the most pleasing forms.

Now the Oak, perhaps, acquires these different modes of growth from the different strata through which it passes. In deep, rich soils, where the root meets no obstruction, the stem, we suppose, grows stately and erect : but when the root meets with a rocky stratum, a hard and gravelly bed, or any other difficulty, through which it is obliged, in a zigzag course, to pick its way, and struggle for a passage, the sympathetic stem, feeling every motion, pursues the same indirect course above, which the root does below : and thus the sturdy plant, through the means of these subterraneous encounters and hardy conflicts, assumes form and character, and becomes, in a due course of centuries, a picturesque tree.

Virgil has given us the picture of an Oak, in which its principal characteristics are well touched.

*‘Esculus imprimis, quæ, quantum vertice ad auras  
Æthereas, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.*

Ergo non hiemes illam, non flabra, neque imbres  
Convellunt : immota manet, multosque per annos  
Multa virûm volvens durando secula vincit.  
Tum fortes late ramos, et brachia tendens  
Huc illuc, media ipsa ingentem sustinet umbram.\*

Subjoined is Gilpin's translation of Virgil's lines on the Oak. The assumption in the translation that by the word *Esculus* a species of Oak is intended, is, we think, fully justified—as Gilpin shows—by the description itself. The word is derived from *esca*, food, and has reference to the edible fruit of the Oak. Pliny uses the word in the same sense ; and though some persons have considered that the Beech, which has, of course, also an edible nut, was intended, there can be little doubt that both of the classical authors really referred to the Italian Oak, the *Quercus esculus* of botanical nomenclature.—ED.

' Deep in the bowels of the earth, the Oak,  
With hardy effort, drives his vigorous root,  
And rears his head as high. No winter storm  
Can touch a trunk so founded. Years revolve ;  
The puny generations of mankind,  
Each after each, expire ; yet firm he stands,  
And stretching, far and wide, his sinewy arms,  
With comprehensive span and sweep of shade,  
O'erspreads a district.'

I shall not enter into a criticism on the word *esculus*, which cannot, on any good authority, I

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\* *Georg.* ii. 290.

think, signify the Beech ; and Pliny's authority,\* may be decisive in favour of its being the Oak. But were it not so, Virgil's description is so strongly marked with the character of the Oak, that it seems to put the matter out of dispute ; and I introduce the quotation merely to bring together, in few words, the most obvious qualities of this most noble plant, in one point of view.

The first characteristic which Virgil mentions is its *firmness*, or the power and strength with which it takes hold of the ground, driving its

\* Pliny, speaking of the different kinds of trees which were dedicated to different deities, tells us, 'Jovi esculus, Apolloni laurus,' &c. Lib. xii. c. 1. Now we know that the Oak was Jupiter's tree. On this point I need only quote Phædrus.

'Olim quas vellent esse in tutelâ suâ  
Divi legerunt arbores ; quercus Jovi,  
Et myrtus Veneri placuit.'

Pliny also in another place, Lib. xvi. c. 6, plainly distinguishes between the *fagus* and the *esculus*. 'Fagi glans triangula cute includitur. Folium tenue, populo simile, celerrime flavescens,' &c. 'Glandem, quæ proprie intelligitur, ferunt robur, quercus, esculus. Continetur hispido calyce. Folia, sinuosa lateribus ; nec, cum cadunt, flavescencia, ut fagi. Glans optima in quercu, et grandissima ; mox esculo.' From this quotation it is plain that Pliny considers the *esculus* as a variety of the *Oak*.

tap-root, in the poet's language, even *into the infernal regions*. No tree resists the blast so steadily. We seldom see the Oak, like other trees, take a twisted form from the winds.\* *Media ipsa ingentem sustinet umbram*: that is, I apprehend, it preserves its balance; which we have seen is one of the grand picturesque beauties of every tree. The Oak, no doubt, like other trees, shrinks from the sea air. But this indicates no weakness. The sea air, like a pestilential disease, attacks the strongest constitutions. It acts by injuring the early bud, which destroys the spray, and, of course, the branch.

A second characteristic of the Oak, of which Virgil takes notice, is the *stoutness of its limbs*; its *fortes ramos*. We know no tree, except perhaps the Cedar of Lebanon, so remarkable in

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\* Mr. Wise, in his valuable work on the New Forest (London, Smith, Elder, and Co., 1862) refers to the extraordinary effect of the Channel winds on the Oaks on the southern side of the Forest, where he says (page 10) that the trees are 'strained and tortured as they are nowhere else in England.' He adds in a footnote: 'In the lower part of the forest, near the Channel, the effect is quite painful, all the trees being strained away from the sea, like Tennyson's thorn.'—ED.

this respect. The limbs of most trees *spring* from the trunk. In the Oak they may be rather said to *divide* from it ; for they generally carry with them a great share of the substance of the stem. You often scarcely know which is stem and which is branch ; and, towards the top, the stem is entirely lost in the branches. This gives particular propriety to the epithet *fortes* in characterizing the branches of the Oak ; and hence its sinewy elbows are of such peculiar use in ship-building. Whoever, therefore, does not mark the *fortes ramos* of the Oak, might as well, in painting a Hercules, omit his muscles. But I speak only of the hardy veterans of the forest. In the effeminate nurslings of the grove we have not this appearance. There, the tree is all stem, drawn up into height. When we characterize a tree, we consider it in its natural state, insulated, and without any lateral pressure. In a forest, trees naturally grow in that manner. The seniors depress all the juniors that attempt to rise near them. But in a *planted* grove all grow up together ; and none can exert any power over another.

The next characteristic of the Oak taken notice



of by the poet, is the *twisting* of its branches : *brachia tendit huc illuc*. Examine the Ash, the Elm, the Beech, or almost any other tree, and you may observe in what direct and straight lines the branches in each shoot from the stem. Whereas the limbs of an Oak are continually twisting *huc illuc*, in various contortions ; and, like the course of a river, sport and play in every possible direction—sometimes in long reaches, and sometimes in shorter elbows. There is not a characteristic more peculiar to the Oak than this.

Another peculiarity, of which Virgil takes notice in the Oak, is its *expansive spread*.

‘Media ipse ingentem sustinet umbram.’

By *ingentem umbram*, I do not suppose the poet means a thick, compact, close-woven foliage, like that of the Beech, which the Oak seldom exhibits. In general, except in very luxuriant soils, the foliage of the Oak is light and thin. I should therefore suppose that, instead of a *close-woven* shade, the poet means an *extended* one, which, indeed, is implied in the expression, just before used, *ramos late tendens*. This indeed is a just

characteristic of the Oak; for its boughs, however twisted, continually take a horizontal direction, and overshadow a large space of ground. Indeed, where it is fond of its situation, and has room to spread, it extends itself beyond any other tree; and, like a monarch, takes possession of the soil.

The last Virgilian characteristic of the Oak is its *longevity*, which extends, I suppose, beyond that of any other tree.

‘*Multa virum volvens durando secula vincit.*’

Perhaps the Yew may be an exception. I mention the circumstance of its longevity as it is of a nature singularly picturesque. It is through age that the Oak acquires its greatest beauty, which often continues increasing even into decay, if any proportion exist between the stem and the branches. When the branches rot away, and the forlorn trunk is left alone, the tree is in its decrepitude—the last stage of life—and all beauty is gone.

To such an Oak Lucan compares Pompey in his declining state.

*‘Stat magni nominis umbra.  
Qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro  
Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans  
Dona ducum ; nec jam validis radicibus hærens,  
Pondere fixa suo est, nudosque per aera ramos  
Effundens, trunco, non frondibus efficit umbram.’*

Spenser has given us the same picture, but with a few more circumstances.

*‘A huge Oak, dry and dead,  
Still clad with reliques of its trophies old,  
Lifting to Heaven its aged, hoary head,  
Whose foot on earth hath got but feeble hold,  
And half disbowell’d stands above the ground,  
With wreathed roots, and naked arms,  
And trunk all rotten, and unsound.’*

I have dwelt the longer on the Oak, as it is, confessedly, both the most picturesque tree in itself, and the most accommodating in composition. It refuses no subject either in natural or in artificial landscape. It is suited to the grandest, and may with propriety be introduced into the most pastoral. It adds new dignity to the ruined tower and Gothic arch: by stretching its wild, moss-grown branches athwart their ivied walls it gives them a kind of majesty coeval with itself. At the same time its propriety is still preserved, if it throw its

arms over the purling brook, or the mantling pool,  
where it beholds

‘Its reverend image in the expanse below.’

Milton introduces it happily even in the lowest scene.

‘Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes  
From between two aged Oaks.’

. After the Oak, let us examine the Ash. This tree, in point of utility, is little inferior to the Oak. Its uses are infinite. To the ashen spear the heroes of antiquity were indebted for half their prowess. In the arts of peace as well as of war, in architecture, tillage, and manufactures, the Ash objects to business of no kind : while even its very refuse spars are accounted the best fuel in the forest.\* The ashen billet produces a steady, bright, lambent flame ; and, as Mr. Evelyn tells us, may be reckoned among the *ἄκαπνα ξύλα*, fuel with little smoke.

I have sometimes heard the Oak called the Hercules of the forest ; and the Ash, the Venus.

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\* In some parts of the continent of Europe the ashen billet sells for one half more than any other wood, except Beech.

The comparison is not amiss : for the Oak joins the idea of strength to beauty, while the Ash rather joins the ideas of beauty and elegance. Virgil marks the character of the Ash, as particularly beautiful.

‘ *Fraxinus in sylvis pulcherrima—* ’ \*

The Ash generally carries its principal stem higher than the Oak, and rises in an easy, flowing line. But its chief beauty consists in the lightness of its whole appearance. Its branches at first keep close to the trunk, and form acute angles with it : but, as they begin to lengthen, they generally take an easy sweep ; and, the looseness of the leaves corresponding with the lightness of the spray, the whole forms an elegant depending foliage. Nothing can have a better effect than an old Ash hanging from the corner of a wood, and bringing off the heaviness of the other foliage with its loose pendent branches. And yet, in some soils, I have seen the Ash lose much of its beauty in the decline of age. Its foliage becomes rare, and meagre ; and its

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\* The Ash is the most beautiful of all the trees in the wood.

branches, instead of hanging loosely, often start away in disagreeable forms. In short, the Ash often loses that grandeur and beauty in old age, which the generality of trees, and particularly the Oak, preserve till a late period of their existence.

The Ash also, on another account, falls under the displeasure of the picturesque eye. Its leaf is much tenderer than that of the Oak, and sooner receives impression from the winds, and frost. Instead of contributing its tint, therefore, in the wane of the year, among the many-coloured offspring of the woods, it shrinks from the blast, drops its leaf, and in each scene where it predominates, leaves wide blanks of desolated boughs, amidst foliage yet fresh and verdant. Before its decay, we sometimes see its leaf tinged with a fine yellow, well contrasted with the neighbouring greens. But this is one of Nature's casual beauties. Much oftener its leaf decays in a dark, muddy, unpleasing tint. And yet sometimes, notwithstanding this early loss of its foliage, we see the Ash, in a sheltered situation, when the rains have been abundant and the season mild, retain its green (a light pleasant green), when

the Oak and the Elm, in its neighbourhood, have put on their autumnal attire.

Another disagreeable circumstance attends the Ash, which is indeed its misfortune rather than its fault. Its leaf and rind are nutritive to deer, and much used in browsing them in summer. The keepers of the forest, therefore, seek out all the Ash trees they can find, which are for this purpose mangled and deformed.

One thing more I should mention with regard to the Ash, as it is of a picturesque nature, and that is the beauty of its roots, which are often finely veined and will take a good polish. Dr. Plot, in his Natural History of Oxfordshire,\* speaks of certain knotty excrescences in the Ash, called the *brusca* and *mollusca*, which, when cut and polished, are very beautiful. He particularly mentions a dining-table, made of the latter, which represents the exact figure of a fish.

With regard to these *exact figures* of animals, and other objects, which we meet with both in stone and wood, I cannot say I should value

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\* Chap. vi. sec. 80.

them much as objects of beauty. They may be whimsical and curious; but, in my opinion, the roots and veins of wood and stone, are much more beautiful when they are wreathed in different fantastic forms, than when they *seem to aim at any exact figures*. In the former case they leave the imagination at liberty to play among them, which is always a pleasing exercise to it: in the latter, they are, at best, awkward and unnatural likenesses, which often disgust the picturesque eye, and always please it less than following its own fancy and picking out resemblances of its own.

Another curiosity in the Ash, which is likewise of the picturesque kind, is a sort of excrescence, which is sometimes found on a leading branch, called a *wreathed fascia*. The fasciated branch is twisted and curled in a very beautiful form; which form it probably takes, as Dr. Plot supposes, from too quick an ascent of the sap:\* or, as other naturalists imagine, from the puncture of some insect in the tender twig, which diverts

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\* See Nat. Hist. Oxf., ch. vi. sec. 82.



the sap from its usual channel and makes the branch monstrous. The wreathed fascia is sometimes found in other wood, in the Willow particularly, and in the Holly; but most commonly it is an excrescence of the Ash. I have a fasciated branch of Ash, found in the woods of Beaulieu, in New Forest, which is most elegantly twisted in the form of a crozier. I have seen a Holly, also, twisted like a ram's horn. We have this appearance sometimes in Asparagus.

It is not uncommon for the seeds of trees, and particularly of the Ash, to seize on some faulty part of a neighbouring trunk, and there strike root. Dr. Plot \* speaks of a piece of vegetable violence of this kind, which is rather extraordinary. An Ash-key, rooting itself on a decayed Willow, and finding, as it increased, a deficiency of nourishment in the mother plant, began to insinuate its fibres, by degrees, through the trunk of the Willow into the earth. There receiving an additional recruit, it began to thrive and expand itself to such a size that it burst the

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\* See Nat. Hist. Oxf., ch. vi. sec. 79.

Willow in pieces, which fell away from it on every side; and what was before the root of the Ash, being now exposed to the air, became the solid trunk of a vigorous tree.

As a beautiful variety of the tree we are now examining, the *Mountain Ash*, often called the *Roan Tree*, should be mentioned. Its name denotes the place of its usual residence. Inured to cold and rugged scenes, it is the hardy inhabitant of the northern parts of this island. Sometimes it is found in softer climes: but there it generally discovers, by its stunted growth, that it does not occupy the situation it loves.

In ancient days, when superstition held that place in society which dissipation and impiety now hold, the *Mountain Ash* was considered as an object of great veneration. Often, at this day, a stump of it is found in some old burying-place; or near the circle of a Druid temple whose rites it formerly invested with its sacred shade. Its chief merit now consists in being the ornament of landscape. In the Scottish Highlands it becomes a considerable tree. There, on some rocky mountain covered with dark Pines and waving

Birch which cast a solemn gloom over the lake below, a few Mountain Ashes joining in a clump, and mixing with them, have a fine effect. In summer, the light green tint of their foliage, and in autumn, the glowing berries which hang clustering upon them, contrast beautifully with the deeper green of the Pines: and, if they are happily blended, and not in too large a proportion, they add some of the most picturesque furniture with which the sides of those rugged mountains are invested.

The Mountain Ash (*Pyrus aucuparia*) is not, as Gilpin supposes, a variety of the Common Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), but a tree which belongs to a different genus, being, in fact, as its generic name *Pyrus* indicates, a relation of the Pear and the Apple. Its common name has been suggested by the general resemblance borne by its leaves to those of the Ash, and by the fact that it grows in mountainous districts.—Ed.

After the Oak and Ash, we examine the Elm. The Oak and the Ash have each a distinct character. The massy form of the one, dividing into abrupt, twisting, irregular limbs—yet compact in its foliage—and the easy sweep of the other,

the simplicity of its branches and the looseness of its hanging leaves, characterize both these trees with so much precision, that, at any distance at which the eye can distinguish the form, it may also distinguish the difference. The Elm has not so distinct a character. It partakes so much of the Oak that, when it is rough and old, it may easily, at a little distance, be mistaken for one; though the Oak, I mean such an Oak as is strongly marked with its peculiar character, can never be mistaken for the Elm. This is certainly a defect in the Elm; for strong characters are a great source of picturesque beauty.

This defect, however, appears chiefly in the skeleton of the Elm. In full foliage its character is better marked. No tree is better adapted to receive grand masses of light. In this respect it is superior, not only to the Oak and the Ash, but perhaps to every other tree. Nor is its foliage, shadowing as it is, of the heavy kind. Its leaves are small, and this gives it a natural lightness; it commonly hangs loosely, and is, in general, very picturesque.

The Elm naturally grows upright, and, when it

meets with a soil it loves, rises higher than the generality of trees ; and, after it has assumed the dignity and hoary roughness of age, few of its forest brethren (though, properly speaking, it is not a forester) excel it in grandeur and beauty.

The Elm is the first tree that salutes the early spring with its light and cheerful green—a tint which contrasts agreeably with the Oak, whose early leaf has generally more of the olive cast. We see them sometimes in fine harmony together about the end of April and the beginning of May. We often, also, see the Elm planted with the Scotch Fir. In the spring its light green is very discordant with the gloomy hue of its companion ; but as the year advances the Elm-leaf takes a darker tint and unites in harmony with the Fir. In autumn also the yellow leaf of the Elm mixes as kindly with the orange of the Beech, the ochre of the Oak, and many of the other fading hues of the wood.

A species of this tree called the Wych Elm, is perhaps generally more picturesque than the common sort, at least on a foreground, as it hangs more negligently ; though, at the same time, with

this negligence it loses in a good degree that happy surface for catching masses of light which we admire in the common Elm, and which adapts it better to a distance. We observe, also, when we see this tree in company with the common Elm, that its bark is somewhat of a lighter hue. The Wych Elm is a native of Scotland, where it is found not only in the plains and valleys of the Lowlands, but is hardy enough to climb the steeps and flourish in the remotest Highlands, though it does not attain, in those climates, the size which it attains in England. Naturalists suppose the Wych Elm to be the only species of this tree which is indigenous to our island.

There is another variety also of this tree called the Weeping Elm. Whether its timber is less useful, or it is propagated with greater difficulty, I know not, but I have rarely met with it. The finest of this species I have seen, grow in St. John's walks at Cambridge. An eye accustomed to the tree will easily perceive that its branches are more pensile, and its leaves of smaller dimensions, than those of the common Elm.

We have made particular inquiry as to the trees still

growing in St. John's walks at Cambridge, and we are indebted especially to the courtesy of Mr. E. H. Sanders, Dr. Bateson, the Master of St. John's College, and other gentlemen for investigating the subject. We learn that several of the oldest trees in St. John's walks have lately been blown down ; but there are other fine old Elms still standing, which are, Mr. Sanders believes, actual remnants of those referred to by Gilpin.—Ed.

An old Elm, which grew formerly in the grove at Magdalen College in Oxford, was by some accident disbarked entirely round. A malady of this kind is generally reckoned fatal to all the vegetable race. But this tree flourished after it as well as any tree in the grove. The probable reasons of this uncommon appearance are given us by the learned author of the Natural History of Oxfordshire in a long philosophical inquiry which may be found in the 166th page of that work. I have heard, also, but I know not on what authority, of another disbarked Elm growing at this time vigorously at Kensington.

The Oak, the Ash, and the Elm are commonly dignified, in our English woods, as a distinct class, by the title of *timber trees*. But the picturesque eye scorns the narrow conceptions of a timber-

merchant, and, with equal complacency, takes in the whole offspring of the wood; though, it must be owned, the three species already characterized are both the most useful and the most picturesque. We esteem it fortunate, when the idea of picturesque beauty coincides with that of utility, as the two ideas are often at variance.

After timber trees, the Beech deserves our notice. Some, indeed, rank the Beech among timber trees; but, I believe, in general it does not find that respect, as its wood is of a soft, spongy nature, sappy and alluring to the worm. And yet I have heard that it has lately been found to answer as well as Elm in forming the keels, stems and stern-posts of the largest ships.

The wood of the Beech has advanced in general estimation since Gilpin's time, and is now largely used, especially for the manufacture of articles of furniture. Loudon remarks that the durability of its wood is said to be increased by steeping it in water; and 'according to some, by disbarking the tree while standing.' He adds, 'In England, at the present time, the Beech is principally employed in making bedsteads and chairs; and it is also in great demand for panels for carriages, and for various purposes in joinery, cabinet-making, and turnery.'—Ed.



In point of picturesque beauty I am not inclined to rank the Beech much higher than in point of utility. Its skeleton, compared with that of the trees we have just examined, is very deficient. Its trunk, we allow, is often highly picturesque. It is studded with bold knobs and projections, and has, sometimes, a sort of irregular fluting about it, which is very characteristic. It has another peculiarity, also, which is sometimes pleasing—that of a number of stems arising from the root. The bark, too, wears often a pleasant hue. It is naturally of a dingy olive; but it is always overspread, in patches, with a variety of mosses and lichens, which are commonly of a lighter tint in the upper parts, and of a deep velvet-green towards the root. Its smoothness, also, contrasts agreeably with these rougher appendages. No bark tempts the lover so much to make it the depository of his mistress's name. It conveys a happy emblem—

*'Crescent illæ; crescetis amores.'*\*

But, having praised the trunk, we can praise no

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\* As the letters of our names increase on the bark, so shall our love.

other part of the skeleton. The branches are fantastically wreathed and disproportioned, twining awkwardly among each other, and running often into long, unvaried lines, without any of that strength and firmness which we admire in the Oak, or of that easy simplicity which pleases in the Ash; in short, we rarely see a Beech well ramified. In full leaf it is equally unpleasing; it has the appearance of an overgrown bush. Virgil indeed was right in choosing the Beech for its shade. No tree forms so complete a roof. If you wish either for shade or shelter, you will find it best

*'Patulæ sub tegmine fagi.'* \*

This bushiness gives a great heaviness to the tree, which is always a deformity. What lightness it has, disgusts. You will sometimes see a light branch issuing from a heavy mass; and, though such pendent branches are often beautiful in themselves, they are seldom in harmony with the tree. They distinguish, however, its character, which will be seen best by comparing it with the Elm.

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\* Under the shelter of a spreading Beech.

The Elm forms a rounder, the Beech a more pointed foliage. But the former is always in harmony with itself.

On the whole, the massy, full-grown, luxuriant Beech is rather a displeasing tree. It is made up of littleness, seldom exhibiting those tufted cups, or hollow, dark recesses, which dispart the several grand branches of the more beautiful kinds of trees. Sometimes, however, we see in Beeches of happy composition, the foliage falling in large flakes, or layers, between which the shadows have a forcible effect when the tree is strongly illumined.

Contrary to the general nature of trees, the Beech is most pleasing in its juvenile state, as it has not yet acquired that heaviness which is its most faulty distinction. A light, airy, young Beech with its spiry branches, hanging, as I have just described them, in easy forms, is often beautiful. I have seen also the forest Beech, in a dry, hungry soil, preserve the lightness of youth in the maturity of age.

After all, however, we mean not to repudiate even the heavy, luxuriant Beech in picturesque

composition. It has sometimes its beauty and oftener its use. In distance it preserves the depth of the forest;\* and even on the spot, in contrast, it is frequently a choice accompaniment. In the corner of a landscape, when we want a thick heavy tree, or part of one at least—which is often necessary—nothing answers our purpose like the Beech. But at present we are not considering the Beech in composition, but only as an individual, and in this light it is in which we chiefly conceive it as an object of disapprobation.

We should not conclude our remarks on the Beech without mentioning its autumnal hues. In this respect it is often beautiful. Sometimes it is dressed in modest brown, but generally in glowing orange: and, in both dresses, its harmony with the grove is pleasing. About the end of September, when the leaf begins to change, it makes a happy contrast with the Oak, whose foliage is yet verdant. Some of the finest oppositions of tint, which perhaps the forest can

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\* We call the forest *deep*, when we cannot see through it; so that, at a distance, a thin wood of Beeches will have the effect of a large one.

furnish, arise from the union of Oak and Beech. We often see a wonderful effect from this combination. And yet, accommodating as its leaf is in landscape, on handling it feels as if it were fabricated with metallic rigour. In its autumnal state it almost crackles :—

‘*Leni crepitabat bractea vento.*’ \*

For this reason, I suppose, as its rigour gives it an elastic quality, the common people in France and Switzerland use it for their beds.

I have dwelt the longer on the Beech as, notwithstanding my severity, it is a tree of picturesque fame ; and I did not choose to condemn without giving my reasons. It has acquired its reputation, I suppose, chiefly from its having a peculiar character ; and this, with all its defects, it certainly has. I may add, also, that if objects receive merit from their associated, as well as from their intrinsic qualities, the dry soil and salubrious air in which the Beech generally flourishes, give it a high degree of estimation.

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\* The light metal crackled in the wind.

We cannot avoid the conviction that, for some reason, our Author entertained a *prejudice* against the Beech, and such a feeling is strange in so keen a lover of Nature. We have elsewhere expressed our own opinion of this delightful tree; and it may not, perhaps, be inappropriate if in this place we make from that opinion the following quotation:—‘In the largest of our woodland Beech growths the striking and impressive character of the Tree can, of course, be most effectively recognized. The straight pillared stem, smooth and grey, rises with lofty symmetry, sometimes in a single column, sometimes in double columns, and, far up aloft, spreads out against the sky a canopy of graceful foliage. The beautiful and impressive character of the Tree is best seen, however, in a Beech wood; for the Beech allows no rivals, and even underwood and turf are banished from the shade of its branches. Looking up, then, in a great Beech wood from the withered leaves, which are strewn in profusion on the ground, giving it a character of lifelessness, and letting the eye wander amidst the forest of symmetrical trunks carried up aloft with surpassing grace and beauty until they spread into the heaven of leafiness above, one is strangely moved by the spectacle; for the wealth of verdure, burnished into silvery gloss by the play of sunlight, tells us of the unseen but patent forces which beneath our feet, where the soil is embrowned by dead leaves, are moving silently upwards through the stately columns, carrying to their summits the life and vigour which give symmetry to stem and branch, grace to clus-

tering bough and twig, and the beauty of colour to the moving forms of glossy leaves.’\*—Ed.

Nearly allied to the Beech in a picturesque light, is the Hornbeam. It grows like it, when it is suffered to grow ; but it is generally seen only in clipped hedges, where it is very obedient to the knife, and, with a little care, will never presume to appear out of form. Its wood is white, tough, and flexible.

The deciduous trees, which I have described, hold certainly the first rank. I shall, however, touch on a few others, which, though neither so beautiful nor so characteristic, are, however, worth the notice of the picturesque eye.

Among these the first place is due to two noble trees of the same kind, both naturalized in England—though from different extremes of the globe—the *Occidental* and the *Oriental* Plane.

The *Occidental* Plane is a native of America ; but has long been known in England, where it attains a considerable growth, though inferior, no doubt, to what it attains in its native soil. Its

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\* *Our Woodland Trees.*

stem is very picturesque. It is smooth, and of a light ash-colour, and has the property of throwing off its bark in scales—thus naturally cleansing itself, at least its larger boughs, from moss, and other parasitical incumbrances. This would be no recommendation of it in a picturesque light, if the removal of these incumbrances did not substitute as great a beauty in their room. These scales are very irregular, falling off sometimes in one part and sometimes in another : and as the under-bark, immediately after its excoriation, is of a lighter hue than the upper, it offers to the pencil those smart touches which have so much effect in painting. These flakes, however, would be more beautiful, if they fell off more in semi-circular laminæ. They would correspond and unite better with the circular form of the bole.

No tree forms a more pleasing shade than the Occidental Plane. It is full-leafed, and its leaf is large, smooth, of a fine texture, and seldom injured by insects. Its lower branches, shooting horizontally, soon take a direction to the ground ; and the spray seems more sedulous than that of any tree we have, by twisting about in various



forms, to fill up every little vacuity with shade. At the same time, it must be owned, the twisting of its branches is a disadvantage to this tree, as we have just observed it is to the Beech, when it is stripped of its leaves, and reduced to a skeleton. It has not the natural appearance, which the spray of the Oak and that of many other trees discovers in winter: though I have heard that in America, where it grows naturally, it grows more freely, and does not exhibit that twisting in its branches. Its foliage, from the largeness of the leaf and the mode of its growth, does not make the most picturesque appearance. One of the finest Occidental Planes I am acquainted with, though I have heard of larger, stands in the vicarage garden at Vicar's Hill, where its boughs, feathering to the ground, form a canopy of above fifty feet in diameter.

The Glebe House at Boldre—restored by the present vicar—still retains, as during Gilpin's residence there, its name of 'Vicar's Hill.' The Occidental Plane referred to by Gilpin is still in full vigour, and now spans 85 feet.—ED.

The *Oriental* Plane is a tree nearly of the same kind, only its leaf is more palmated; nor has it

so great a disposition to overshadow the ground, as the Occidental Plane. At least I never saw any in our climate form so noble a shade ; though, in the East, it is esteemed among the most shady and most magnificent of trees. Lady Craven speaks of some she saw in the Turkish dominions of a size so gigantic, that the largest trees we have in England placed near them, would appear only like broomsticks.\* In Italy a very noble collection of them form the avenue to the convent of Grotta-Ferrata, near Frascati, which is said to occupy the exact site of Tully's Tusculan villa, about twelve miles from Rome on the Alban Hill. The tree at the end of the avenue farthest from the convent, and close to a plentiful spring, exceeds the rest in size and beauty. This convent is often visited for the sake of a picture by Dominichino.

The Oriental Plane I believe sheds its bark like the Occidental, and the catkins of both are round, spicated balls about the size of walnuts, and fastened together often in pairs, like chain-

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\* Letter 47.

shot. From this circumstance the Occidental Plane is called, in America, the Button Tree. It flourishes there, commonly, by the sides of creeks and rivers, and is of quick growth. The Oriental Plane, I believe, loves the same soil : at least, both trees in England are fond of moist ground.

Kempfer tells us \* that at Jedo, the capital of Japan, he found a species of this tree, the leaves of which were beautifully variegated, like the tri-colour, with red, green and yellow. An appearance of this kind is so contrary to Nature's usual mode of colouring the leaves of forest trees that I should rather suspect Kempfer saw it either when the leaves were in the wane, or blasted, or in some other unnatural state.

I may add, with regard to the Occidental Plane, and indeed, I believe, with regard to both the trees of this species, that their summer leaf wears so light a hue, as to mix ill with the foliage of the Oak, the Elm, and other trees. I have seen them, on the skirts of a plantation, forming, during the summer, a disagreeable spot. In

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\* See page 524.

autumn, their leaves receive a mellow tint which harmonizes very well with the waning colours of the wood. I have heard of other varieties of these foreign Planes; but if there are, I am unacquainted with them.

One singularity of this tree may be mentioned, which I believe runs through all its varieties. The stem of every leaf forms, at its insertion into the spray, a little calyx or cup, which covers and defends the bud of the succeeding year. In autumn you easily discover it by pulling off a decayed leaf.

The Poplar tribe shall be considered next. They are numerous, and some of them picturesque. They are at least stately trees; but their thin, quivering foliage is neither adapted to catch masses of light, like that of the Elm, nor has it the hanging lightness of the Ash. Its chief use in landscape is to mix as a variety, in contrast with other trees.

Within these few years the Lombardy Poplar, which graces the banks of the Po, has been much introduced in English plantations. It seems to like a British soil, and its youth is promising, but I have never seen it in full maturity. Its conic

form as a deciduous tree, is peculiar. Among evergreens we find the same character in the Cypress, and both trees, in many situations, have a good effect. The Cypress often, among the ruins of ancient Rome, breaks the regularity of a wall or a pediment by its conic form; and the Poplar on the banks of the Po no doubt has the same effect among its deciduous brethren, by forming the apex of a clump, though I have been told that, in its age, it loses its shape in some degree, and spreads more into a head. The oldest Poplars of this kind I have seen are at Blenheim. They are not old trees, but are very tall, and I believe still preserve their spiry form.\*

One beauty the Italian Poplar possesses, which is almost peculiar to itself, and that is the waving line it forms when pressed by wind. Most trees in this circumstance are partially agitated. One side is at rest, while the other is in motion. But the Italian Poplar waves in one simple sweep from the top to the bottom, like an ostrich-feather on a lady's head. All the

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\* Three of them are still living.—Ed.

branches coincide in the motion, and the blast often makes an impression upon it when other trees are at rest. I have mentioned, among the adventitious beauties of trees, their *susceptibility of motion* ;\* but, in painting, I know not that I should represent any kind of motion in a tree, except that of a violent storm. When the blast is loud and boisterous ; when the black heavens are in unison with it, and help to tell the story, an Oak, straining in the wind, is an object of picturesque beauty. But when the gentle breeze, pressing upon the quivering Poplar, bends it only in easy motion, while a serene sky indicates the heavens to be at peace, there is nothing to act in concert with the motion of the tree : it seems to have taken its form from the influence of a sea air, or some other malign impression, and, exhibiting an unnatural appearance, disgusts. One thing more I should mention with regard to the Italian Poplar, which is, that although it sometimes has a good effect, when standing single, it generally has a

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\* See page 39.

better when two or three are planted in a group.

The Walnut is not an unpicturesque tree. The warm, russet hue of its young foliage makes a pleasing variety among the vivid green of other trees, about the end of May : and the same variety is maintained in summer, by the contrast of its yellowish hue, when mixed in any quantity with trees of a darker tint ; but it opens its leaves so late, and drops them so early, that it cannot long be in harmony with the grove. It stands best alone, and the early loss of its foliage is of the less consequence, as its ramification is generally beautiful.

The Lime is an elegant tree, where it is suffered to grow at large ; but we generally see it in straight bondage, clipped into shape, and forming the sides of avenues and vistas. But in its best state it is not very interesting. It has a uniformity of surface, without any of those breaks and hollows which the most picturesque trees present, and which give their foliage so much beauty. One circumstance, however, should recommend the Lime to all lovers of the imitative

arts. No wood is so easily formed under the carver's chisel. It is the wood which the ingenious Gibbon used, after making trial of several kinds, as the most proper for that curious sculpture which adorns some of the old houses of our nobility.

If not, strictly speaking, a picturesque, the Lime is a very beautiful tree; and not less, as we think, in its leafless form than when clothed, in the early summer, with its exquisite golden green foliage. The objectionable custom of clipping it 'into shape' is almost, if not quite, as much practised now as in Gilpin's time, and, possibly, the unpicturesqueness ascribed to it by our Author may have arisen, in the specimens which he saw, from some previous process of clipping of which he had no knowledge. We have spoken elsewhere\* of the foliage and of the general character of the Lime, and of the tree in its leafless form we may say that it is—more especially in its earlier years, when untouched by the pruning knife of the gardener, and suffered to grow in freedom—unrivalled in symmetry and beauty. There are, for instance, young specimens growing under such circumstances at the present time in Kew Gardens which will fully justify this opinion. For ornamental carving Lime

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\* In *Our Woodland Trees*.



wood is superior to any other, and it has the advantage of keeping free from the attacks of insects.—ED.

The Maple is an uncommon tree, though a common bush. Its wood is of little value and it is, therefore, rarely suffered to increase. We seldom see it employed in any nobler service than in filling up its part in a hedge, in company with thorns and briars and other ditch trumpery. Yet the ancients held it in great repute. Pliny\* speaks as highly of the knobs and excrescences of this tree, called the *brusca* and *mollusca*, as Dr. Plot does of those of the Ash.† The veins of these excrescences in the Maple, Pliny tells us, were so variegated that they exceeded the beauty of any other wood, even of the Citron; though the Citron was in such repute at Rome that Cicero, who was neither rich nor expensive, was tempted to give ten thousand sesterces for a Citron table. The *brusca* and *mollusca*, Pliny adds, were rarely of size sufficient for the larger species of furniture; but in all smaller cabinet

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\* See Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. xvi. ch. 16.

† See page 55. See also Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. xiii. ch. 15.

work they were inestimable. Indeed the whole tree was esteemed by the ancients, on account of its variegated wood. In Ovid we find it thus celebrated :—

‘Acerque coloribus impar.’\*

How far, at this day, it may be valued for cabinet work, I know not. I have, here and there, seen boxes, and other little things made of it, which I have thought beautiful. But I am told that in North America, where it grows wild, it is in much esteem. When the cabinet maker meets with a knotted tree of this kind, which is there called the *curled Maple*, he prizes it highly.

In the few instances I have met with of this tree in a state of maturity its form has appeared picturesque. It is not unlike the Oak, but is more bushy, and its branches are closer and more compact. One of the largest Maples I have seen, stands in the churchyard of Boldre, in New Forest: but I have not met with specimens enough of this tree to form an opinion of its general character.

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\* Met., lib. x. v. 1. The Maple stained with various hues.

The Field Maple in Boldre churchyard, referred to by Gilpin, was destined to be invested with a peculiar interest, for under its shadow is the grave of this true lover of Nature. Gilpin, as we have already stated, was buried in Boldre churchyard by his own request, and his gravestone bears an inscription part of which he himself had written some little time before his death. The same grave encloses the remains of Gilpin's wife, who died July 14th, 1807.—ED.

The Great Maple, commonly called the *Sycamore*, is a grander and nobler tree than the smaller Maple; but it wants its elegance; it is coarse in proportion to its bulk. It forms, however, an impenetrable shade, and often receives well-contrasted masses of light. Its bark has not the furrowed roughness of the Oak, but it has a species of roughness very picturesque. In itself, it is smooth, but it peels off in large flakes, like the Planes (to which, in other respects, it bears a near alliance), leaving patches of different hues, seams and cracks, which are often picturesque.

The Chestnut, in maturity and perfection, is a noble tree, and grows not unlike the Oak. Its ramification is more straggling; but it is easy, and its foliage loose. This is the tree which

graces the landscapes of Salvator Rosa. In the mountains of Calabria, where Salvator painted, the Chestnut flourished. There he studied it in all its forms, breaking and disposing it in a thousand beautiful shapes, as the exigencies of his composition required. I have heard, indeed, that it is naturally brittle, and liable to be shattered by winds, which might be one reason for Salvator's attachment to it. But although I have many times seen the Chestnut in England, old enough to be in a fruit-bearing state, yet I have seldom seen it in a state of full picturesque maturity. The best I have seen, stand on the banks of the Tamar, in Cornwall, at an old house, belonging to the Edgcumbe family. I have heard also that at Beechworth Castle, in Surrey, there are not fewer than seventy or eighty Chestnuts, measuring from twelve to eighteen or twenty feet in girth, and some of them of very picturesque form; but I saw them only at a distance. In Kent also the Chestnut is frequently found.

Some of the old Chestnuts referred to by Gilpin as standing on the banks of the Tamar have disappeared; but we have learnt, on inquiry, that two of them are still in

existence, growing near what was once an old stable on Lord Mount Edgcumbe's estate. These trees are believed to be upwards of three hundred years old!—ED.

It is said, indeed, that this tree was once very common in England, and that beams of it are often seen, at this day, in churches and old houses. In the belfry particularly of the church at Sutton, near Mitcham, in Surrey, I have seen beams which are like Oak, yet plainly appear to be of a different kind of timber, and are supposed to be Chestnut. I have often heard also, that the timber of the old houses of London was of Chestnut. Whether this tree was ever indigenous to this country seems to be matter of speculation. As its timber is said to be serviceable, and as its fruit, though rarely of perfect growth in this climate, might however be of some use, we are at a loss to conceive, if it had once gotten footing amongst us, how it should ever be, as it now is, almost totally exterminated. Some have endeavoured to account for this, by showing that it is not so good a timber tree as is supposed, for it decays at the heart, and will continue decaying, till it become merely a shell, and for this

reason it has been less sought after and encouraged. How far this may be true I know not. I rather suspect its truth.\* Some years ago Mr. Daines Barrington read a paper to the Royal Society, in which he endeavoured to prove that the Chestnut was not indigenous to this country. Dr. Ducarel answered him, and alleged from ancient records, and other evidences, that Chestnut formerly abounded in many woody scenes in England, and was certainly a native of this island. Among the ancient records to which he appeals, one is dated in the time of Henry II. It is a deed of gift from Roger, Earl of Hereford, to Flexley Abbey, of the tithe of all his Chestnuts in the Forest of Dean.†

Many persons have shared the belief of Gilpin that the wood found in a number of the most ancient buildings in this country was that of the Chestnut; and this belief gave rise to the opinion that *Castanea vesca* must be indigenous. But Buffon suggested that the timber in old buildings,

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\* In the tenth volume of the Transactions of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, &c., some instances are given of its being a very useful timber tree.

† See Four Letters on Chestnut trees, read before the Royal Society, 1771.

supposed to be that of the Chestnut, was in reality the wood of the Durmast Oak (*Quercus sessiliflora*), and this view has since been adopted by other writers. There is a great similarity in the two kinds of timber, and hence, doubtless, the confusion. The church at Sutton has been wholly rebuilt since Gilpin's time, and the timber of the tower has, the present rector informs us, been 'used again in various places.' It is a curious fact that the timber of the Chestnut—unlike that of the Oak—decreases in value as the tree increases in age.—ED.

The Horse-Chestnut is a heavy, disagreeable tree. It forms its foliage generally in a round mass, with little appearance of those breaks which, we have observed, contribute to give an airiness and lightness, at least a richness and variety to the whole mass of foliage. This tree is, however, chiefly admired for its flower, which *in itself* is beautiful; but the whole tree together in flower is a glaring object, totally unharmonious, and unpicturesque. The park at Hampton Court, planted, I believe, by King William, is a superb specimen of a plantation of Horse-Chestnuts. In some situations indeed, and among a profusion of other wood, a single tree or two, in bloom, may be beautiful. As it forms an admirable shade, it may

be of use, too, in thickening distant scenery, or in screening an object at hand, for there is no species of foliage, however heavy, nor any species of bloom, however glaring, which may not be brought, by some proper contrast, to produce a good effect.

. It is seldom that we can express disagreement with so true a lover of Nature and so delightful a writer as the Author of this 'Forest Scenery.' But we are impelled to put in a plea for the Horse-Chestnut; for we cannot allow that it is a 'disagreeable tree' either in summer or winter. Wild Nature produces nothing unlovely, and it is by her contrasts, as much as by her harmonies, that she charms. Those who love her, and all, indeed, who have an eye for the picturesque, will not judge her pictures by their outlines alone. They will look with earnest and curious eyes into their details. And those who do this can surely not deny that an individual leaf of the Horse-Chestnut is a study in itself and an object of singular beauty. Collectively, the wealth of glorious leafage on a large specimen of *Æsculus hippocastanum* presents a magnificent spectacle either in the early spring time, when a golden hue overspreads its foliage, or in the season of its full glory, when a greater depth of verdancy makes more fitting contrast with the white and brilliant heads of bloom.—Ed.

The Weeping Willow is a very picturesque tree. It is a perfect contrast to what we have just



observed of the Lombardy Poplar. The light airy spray of the Poplar rises perpendicularly. That of the Weeping Willow is pendent. The shape of its leaf is conformable to the pensile character of the tree, and its spray, which is still lighter than that of the Poplar, is more easily put into motion by a breath of air. The Weeping Willow, however, is not adapted to sublime subjects. We wish it not to screen the broken buttresses and Gothic windows of an abbey, nor to overshadow the battlements of a ruined castle. These offices it resigns to the Oak, whose dignity can support them. The Weeping Willow seeks a humbler scene—some romantic foot-path bridge, which it half conceals—or some glassy pool, over which it hangs its streaming foliage,—

‘ And dips

Its pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink.’

In these situations it appears in character, and, of course, to advantage. I have heard indeed that the Weeping Willow is not naturally an aquatic plant, but its being commonly believed to be so is ground enough to establish it as such, in landscape at least, if not in botany.

The Weeping Willow is the only one of its tribe that is beautiful. Botanists, I believe, enumerate sixteen species of the Willow. Some of them I have seen attain a very remarkable size. I remember seeing one, in a meadow near Witham, in Essex, which spread over a space of ground measuring twenty-nine paces. But, in general, all the trees of this sort are of straggling ramification, and without any of that elegant streaming form which we admire in the Weeping Willow. I should rarely therefore advise their use in painting, except as pollards to characterize a marshy country, or to mark, in a second distance, the winding banks of a heavy, low-sunk river, which could not otherwise be noticed. Some Willows indeed I have thought beautiful, and fit to appear in the decoration of any rural scene. The kind I have most admired has a small narrow leaf, and wears a pleasant, light, sea-green tint, which mixes agreeably with foliage of a deeper hue. I am not acquainted with the botanical name of this species, but I believe the botanists call it the *Salix alba*.

The Withy, or *Salix fragilis*, is the most inconsiderable of its tribe. Like others of its kindred, it will grow in any soil, though it loves a moist one. It is of little value in landscape, and yet there is something beautiful in its silver-coated catkins, which open, as the year advances, into elegant hanging tufts; and when the tree is large and in full bloom, make a beautiful variety among the early productions of the spring.

The art of multiplying species, by giving to plants which slightly differ from each other distinct botanical names, has become very much developed since Gilpin's time. Even botanists in his day were content to divide the genus *Salix* into sixteen species. But now two hundred varieties are named as existing in English collections, and not less than seventy of these are said to be natives of Britain! Gilpin is content to describe *three* species.—ED.

Nearly related to the Willow tribe, though in Nature rather than in form, is the *Alder*. They both love a low moist soil, and frequently the banks of rivers, though it may be alleged in favour of both, that they will flourish in the poorest forest swamps where nothing else will grow. The Alder is, however, the more picturesque tree, both in its

ramification, and in its foliage; perhaps, indeed, it is the most picturesque of any of the aquatic tribe, except the Weeping Willow. He who would see the Alder in perfection, must follow the banks of the Mole, in Surrey, through the sweet vales of Dorking and Mickleham into the groves of Esher. The Mole, indeed, is far from being a beautiful river; it is a silent and sluggish stream. But what beauty it has it owes greatly to the Alder, which everywhere fringes its meadows, and, in many places, forms pleasing scenes, especially in the vale between Box Hill, and the high grounds of Norbury Park.

Some of the largest Alders we have in England grow in the Bishop of Durham's park at Auckland-castle. The generality of trees acquire picturesque beauty by age, but it is not often that they are suffered to attain this picturesque period. Some use is commonly found for them long before that time. The Oak falls for the greater purposes of man, and the Alder is ready to supply a variety of his smaller wants. An old tree, therefore, of any kind is a curiosity; and even an Alder, such as those at Auckland-castle, when dignified by age,

makes a respectable figure. The circumference of the largest of these trees is nine feet ten inches, at four feet from the surface. There are many noble Alders, also, in the park at Hagley.

The Mole still, as when Gilpin wrote, owes its beauty largely to the Alders which fringe its banks. We referred the passage from the text to the Rev. Samuel L. Warren, the present Vicar of Esher, and have been assured, as the result of painstaking inquiry courteously undertaken for us, that it 'correctly represents the present condition of the river in that particular.' The Rev. Robert Long, the Vicar of Auckland St. Andrew, informs us that all the old Alders in the Bishop's park have disappeared. He adds, 'the stumps remain of some of them to bear witness that they were giants, but their glory is departed.'—Ed.

The Birch may have several varieties, with which I am not acquainted. The most common species of it in England are the Black and the White. The former is a native of Canada, the latter of Britain. Of the White Birch there is a very beautiful variety, sometimes called the Lady Birch, or the Weeping Birch. Its spray being slenderer and longer than the common sort, forms an elegant pensile foliage, like the Weeping Willow, and, like it, is put in motion by the least

breath of air. When agitated, it is well adapted to characterize a storm, or to perform any office in landscape which is expected from the Weeping Willow.

The stem of the Birch is generally marked with brown, yellow, and silvery touches, which are peculiarly picturesque, as they are characteristic objects of imitation for the pencil, and as they contrast agreeably with the dark-green hue of the foliage. But only the stem and larger branches have this varied colouring; the spray is of a deep brown. As the Birch grows old, its bark becomes rough and furrowed. It loses all its varied tints, and assumes a uniform, ferruginous hue.

The bark of this tree has the property (perhaps peculiar to itself) of being more firm and durable than the wood it invests. Of this the peasants of Sweden, Lapland, and other northern countries (where the Birch is abundant), take advantage; and shaping it like tiles, cover their houses with it. How very durable it is, we have a remarkable instance in Maupertuis's travels. When that philosopher traversed Lapland to measure a degree of latitude, he was obliged to pass through vast

forests, consisting entirely of Birch. The soil in some parts of these wastes being very shallow, or very loose, the trees had not a sufficient footing for their roots, and became an easy prey to winds. In these places Maupertuis found as many trees blown down as standing. He examined several of them, and was surprised to see that in such as had lain long, the substance of the wood was entirely gone; but the bark remained a hollow trunk without any signs of decay. I have heard that the bark of the Black Cherry Tree in North America, which grows there to a great size, has the same property.

Among elegant, pendent trees, the *Acacia* should not be forgotten; though the *Acacia* which we have in England (called by the botanist the *Robinia*) is perhaps only a poor substitute of this plant in its greatest perfection. And yet even ours, when we have it full grown, is often a very beautiful tree, whether it feathers to the ground, as it sometimes does, or whether it is adorned with a light foliage hanging from the stem. But its beauty is very frail. It is, of all trees, the least able to endure the blast. In some

sheltered spot it may ornament a garden, but it is by no means qualified to adorn an exposed country. Its wood is of so brittle a texture, especially when it is encumbered with a weight of foliage, that you can never depend upon its aid in filling up the part you wish. The branch you admire to-day may be demolished to-morrow. The misfortune is, the Acacia is not one of those grand objects like the Oak, whose dignity is often increased by ruin. It depends on its *beauty* rather than its *grandeur*, which is a quality much more liable to injury. I may add, however, in its favour, that if it be easily injured, it repairs the injury more quickly than any other tree. Few trees make so rapid a growth.

In one of the memoirs published by the Agricultural Society at Paris the virtues of this tree are highly extolled. Its shade encourages the growth of grass. Its roots are so tenacious of the soil, and shoot up in such groves of suckers, that, when planted on the banks of rivers, it contributes exceedingly to fix them as barriers against the incursions of the stream. Acacia-stakes, too, are as durable as those of any wood.



In North America this tree is much valued; in proof of which the memorialist tells a story of a farmer in Long Island, who planted an ordinary field of fourteen acres with suckers of this plant, in the year of his marriage, as a portion for his children. His eldest son married at twenty-two. On this occasion the farmer cut about three hundred pounds' worth of timber out of his *Acacia* wood, which he gave his son to buy a settlement in Lancaster county. Three years after, he did as much for a daughter. And thus he provided for his whole family; the wood, in the mean time, repairing by suckers all the losses it received.

I shall conclude my account of deciduous trees with the Larch, which is a kind of connecting species between them and the race of evergreens. Though it sheds its leaf with the former, it bears a cone, is resinous, and ramifies like the latter. It claims the Alps and Apennines for its native country, where it thrives in higher regions of the air than any tree of its consequence is known to do; hanging over rocks and precipices which have never been visited by human feet. Often it is felled by the Alpine peasant, and thrown

athwart some yawning chasm, where it affords a tremendous passage from cliff to cliff, while the cataract roaring many fathoms below, is seen only in surges of rising vapour.

In ancient times the Larch was employed in still more arduous service. When Hannibal laid the cliffs bare and heaped up piles of timber to melt the rocks (so Livy tells us) the Larch was his fuel: its unctuous sides soon spread the flame; and, as the gloom of evening came on, the appendages of a numerous host, elephants, and floating banners and gleaming arms, formed terrific images through the night, while the lofty summits of the Alps were illumined far and wide.

Strabo speaks of Alpine trees (which most probably were Larches) of a very great size. Many of them, he says, would measure eight feet in diameter.\* And, at this day, masts of single Larches, measuring from a hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty feet in length, have been floated from Valais, through the lake of Geneva, and down the Rhone, to Toulon; though I have

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\* Lib. iv., p. 202.

heard they are in no great esteem among the contractors for the French dockyards.

In the memoirs of the Royal Society of Agriculture at Paris for the year 1787, there is an essay by M. le Président de la Tour d'Aigues, on the culture of the Larch, in which it is celebrated as one of the most useful of all timber trees. He tells us that, in his own garden, he has rails which were put up in the year 1743, partly of Oak, and partly of Larch. The former, he says, have yielded to time, but the latter are still sound. And in his castle of Tour d'Aigues he has larchen beams of twenty inches square, which are sound, though above two hundred years old. The finest trees he knows, of this kind, grow in some parts of Dauphiné, and in the forest of Baye in Provence, where there are Larches, he tells us, which two men cannot fathom. I have heard that old, dry Larch will take such a polish as to become almost transparent, and that, in this state, it may be wrought into the most beautiful wainscot. In my encomium of the Larch, I must not omit that the old painters used it more than any other wood to paint on, before the use of canvas became general.

Many of Raphael's pictures are painted on boards of Larch.

The Larch we have in England compared with the Larch of the Alps is a diminutive plant. It is little more than the puny inhabitant of a garden, or the embellishment of some trifling artificial scene. The characters of grand and noble seldom belong to it. It is, however, an elegant tree, though, in our soil at least, too formal in its growth. Among its native steepes its form, no doubt, is fully picturesque, when the storms of many a century have shattered its equal sides and given contrast and variety to its boughs.

Since Gilpin's time the Larch has been much more extensively cultivated than it used to be, and its timber, also, has come to be held in much greater estimation than it formerly was. It is no longer 'the puny inhabitant of a garden;' and though in England we have not, perhaps, very many large specimens, it is far otherwise in Scotland, upon whose mountains *Larix europæa* grows to grand dimensions. What our Author says of the quality of its timber is fully justified by the results of modern experience. Another reason, however, than that which he appears to suggest, would probably have accounted for the apparent disinclination of the French naval contractors to use Larch for masts—namely the difficulty of transport-

ing trees of the necessary size. This, at any rate, is the explanation suggested by M. C. de Kirwan, an Inspector in the Forestal Department of France, and the able author of a work on Coniferous trees (*Les Conifères, indigènes et exotiques*. Paris. J. Rothschild). In an interesting communication with which he has favoured us, M. de Kirwan says, 'Malheureusement le Mélèze, en France, ne croît que dans des régions montagneuses des plus abruptes et difficilement accessibles. Il en résulte que l'exploitation en longues billes et le transport à grandes distances de ce roi des montagnes alpestres est malaise et onéreux. C'est probablement pour cette cause que la marine française n'a pas l'habitude de se servir de cette essence, et c'est dommage, sans doute ; car, outre la souplesse et la résistance de son bois, le Mélèze, arbre de première grandeur, arrive fréquemment à une hauteur de 30 à 40 mètres, avec un diamètre proportionné. Fortement imprégné de résine, le Mélèze défie les outrages du temps comme les attaques et les morsures des insectes.' A further extract, which we subjoin, from M. de Kirwan's letter, touching the peculiar and valuable qualities of Larch wood and its use in shipping, will be read with interest as an appropriate appendix to Gilpin's remarks on this subject. The author of *Les Conifères* says,—'Il est certain que le Mélèze des Alpes, ayant crû aux altitudes de 1000 à 1900 ou 2000 mètres, offre des qualités précieuses pour tout espèce de constructions, y compris les constructions maritimes. Il est employé, notamment dans la marine du lac de Genève,

et l'on a pu y constater que les bordages en bois de Mélèze ont plus de durée même que ceux de Chêne. Pour la mûture, ce bois ne doit pas être moins avantageux ; car les accroissements annuels, très minces, très réguliers, et formés de zones alternativement molles et dures, en acquièrent une très grande élasticité qui lui donne à la fois durée et force de résistance.'—Ed.

From deciduous trees we proceed to evergreens. Of these the Cedar of Lebanon claims our first notice. To it, pre-eminence belongs, not only on account of its own dignity, but on account of the respectable mention which is everywhere made of it in Scripture. Solomon spake of trees *from the Cedar of Lebanon to the Hyssop that springeth out of the wall*: that is, from the greatest to the least. The Eastern writers are, indeed, the principal sources from which we are to obtain the true character of the Cedar, as it is an Eastern tree. In the sacred writers particularly we are presented with many noble images drawn from its several qualities. It is generally employed by the prophets to express strength, power, and longevity. The strength of the Cedar is used as an emblem to express the power even of Jehovah. *The voice of the Lord*

*breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon.* David characterizes the Palm Tree and the Cedar together, both very strongly. *The righteous shall flourish like a Palm Tree; and spread abroad like a Cedar of Lebanon.* The *flourishing* head of the Palm, and the *spreading abroad* of the Cedar, are equally characteristic.

But the prophet Ezekiel has given us the fullest description of the Cedar :—

‘Behold the Assyrian was a Cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. His boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long. The Fir trees were not like his boughs, nor the Chestnut trees like his branches, nor any tree in the garden of God like unto him in beauty.’\*

In this description two of the principal characteristics of the Cedar are marked.

The first is the multiplicity and length of his branches. Few trees divide so many fair branches from the main stem, or spread over so large a

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\* Ezek. xxxi.

compass of ground. *His boughs are multiplied*, as Ezekiel says, and *his branches became long* ; which David calls *spreading abroad*. His very *boughs* are equal to the *stem* of a Fir, or a Chestnut.

The second characteristic is what Ezekiel, with great beauty and aptness, calls his *shadowing shroud*. No tree in the forest is more remarkable than the Cedar for its close-woven, leafy canopy.

Ezekiel's Cedar is marked as a tree of full and perfect growth, from the circumstance of its top being *among the thick boughs*. Every young tree has a leading branch or two, which continue spiring above the rest till the tree has attained its full size : then it becomes in the language of the nurseryman *clump-headed* ; but, in the language of Eastern sublimity, its top is *among the thick boughs* ; that is, no distinction of any spiry head or leading branch, appears : the head and the branches are all mixed together. This is generally, in all trees, the state in which they are most perfect and most beautiful : and this is the state of Ezekiel's Cedar.

But though Ezekiel has given us this accurate description of the Cedar, he has left its *strength*,



which is its *chief characteristic*, untouched. But the reason is evident. The Cedar is here introduced as an emblem of Assyria, which, though vast and wide-spreading and come to full maturity, was, in fact, on the eve of destruction. *Strength*, therefore, was the last idea which the prophet wished to suggest. Strength is a relative term compared with opposition. The Assyrian was strong compared with the powers on earth, but weak compared with the arm of the Almighty which brought him to destruction. So his type, the Cedar, was stronger than any of the trees of the forest, but weak in comparison with the axe which cut him off, and left him (as the prophet expresses the vastness of his ruin) *spread upon the mountains and in the valleys; while the nations shook at the sound of his fall*.

Such is the grandeur and form of the Cedar of Lebanon. Its mantling foliage, or *shadowing shroud*, as Ezekiel calls it, is its greatest beauty, which arises from the horizontal growth of its branches, forming a kind of sweeping, irregular pent-house. And when, to the idea of beauty, that of strength is added by the pyramidal form of the

stem and the robustness of the limbs, the tree is complete in all its beauty and majesty.

In these climates, indeed, we cannot expect to see the Cedar in such perfection. The forest of Lebanon is perhaps the only part of the world where its growth is perfect; yet we may in some degree conceive its beauty and majesty from the paltry resemblances of it at this distance from its native soil. In its *youth* it is often, with us, a vigorous, thriving plant, and if the leading branch is not bound to a pole (as many people deform their Cedars) but left to take its natural course and guide the stem after it in some irregular waving line, it is often an object of great beauty. But, in its *maturer age*, the beauty of the English Cedar is generally gone, it becomes shrivelled, deformed and stunted; its body increases, but its limbs shrink and wither. Thus it never gives us its two leading qualities together. In its youth we have some idea of its *beauty* without its *strength*, and in its advanced age we have some idea of its *strength* without its *beauty*: the imagination, therefore, by joining together the two different periods of its age in this climate, may

form some conception of the grandeur of the Cedar in its own climate, where its strength and beauty are united. The best specimen of this tree I ever saw in England was at Hillington, near Uxbridge. The perpendicular height of it was fifty three feet, its horizontal expanse ninety six, and its girth fifteen and a half. When I saw it, in 1776, it was about one hundred and eighteen years of age, and being then completely clump-headed, it was a very noble and picturesque tree. In the high winds about the beginning of the year 1790, this noble Cedar was blown down. Its stem, when cut, was five feet in diameter.

After the Cedar the Stone Pine deserves our notice. It is not indigenous to our soil, but, like the Cedar, it is in some degree naturalized, though in England it is rarely more than a puny, half-formed resemblance of the Italian Pine. The soft clime of Italy alone gives birth to the true picturesque Pine.\* There it always suggests ideas of

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\* This seems to be a disputed point. Millar believes it is not indigenous in Italy ; and indeed I never heard any traveller say he had met with it in any of the uncultivated parts of that country.

broken porticos, Ionic pillars, triumphal arches, fragments of old temples, and a variety of classic ruins, which, in Italian landscape, it commonly adorns.

The Stone Pine promises little in its infancy in point of picturesque beauty. It does not, like most of the Fir species, give an early indication of its future form. In its youth it is dwarfish and round-headed, with a short stem, and has rather the shape of a full-grown bush than of an increasing tree. As it grows older, it does not soon deposit its formal shape. But as it attains maturity, its picturesque form increases fast. Its lengthening stem assumes commonly an easy sweep. It seldom, indeed, deviates much from a straight line, but that gentle deviation is very graceful, though, above all other lines, difficult to trace. If accidentally either the stem, or any of the larger branches, take a larger sweep than usual, that sweep seldom fails to be graceful. It is also among the beauties of the Stone Pine that, as the lateral branches decay, they leave generally stumps, which, standing out in various parts of the stem, break the continuity of its lines.

The bark is smoother than that of any other tree of the Pine kind, except the Weymouth; though we do not esteem this among its picturesque beauties. Its hue, however, which is warm and reddish, has a good effect; and it obtains a kind of roughness by peeling off in patches.

The foliage of the Stone Pine is as beautiful as the stem. Its colour is a deep, warm green; and its form, instead of breaking into acute angles, like many of the Pine race, is moulded into a flowing line by an assemblage of small masses.

As age comes on, its round clump-head becomes more flat, spreading itself into a canopy, which is a form equally becoming. And yet I doubt whether any resinous tree ever attains that picturesque beauty in age which we admire so much in the Oak. The Oak continues long vigorous in his branches, though his trunk decays: but the resinous tree, I believe, decays more equally through all its parts; and, in age, oftener presents the idea of vegetable decrepitude than of the stout remains of a vigorous constitution. And

yet, in many circumstances, even in this state, it may be an object of picturesque notice.

Thus we see, in the form of the Stone Pine, what beauty may result from a tree with a round head and without lateral branches, which requires indeed a good example to prove. When we look at an Ash or an Elm, from which the lateral branches have been stripped, as is the practice in some countries, we are apt to think that no tree, with a head placed on a long stem, can be beautiful: yet in Nature's hands (which can mould so many forms of beauty) it may easily be effected. Nature herself, however, does not always follow the rules of picturesque beauty in the production of this kind of object. The Cabbage Tree, I suppose, is as ugly as the Stone Pine is picturesque. The best specimen of the Stone Pine I ever saw was growing in the botanical garden at Oxford. For the sake of the ground it occupied (I have never heard any other reason suggested) it was lately cut down.

The most beautiful succedaneum of the Stone Pine which these climates afford is the Pinaster. The sweep of its stem is similar, its broken lateral

branches likewise, and its clump-head. Both trees, also, are equally irregular in their growth; but the Pinaster is perhaps more picturesque in the roughness of its dark-grey bark. On no trees have I seen broader and better varied masses of light and shade: but the closeness of the Pinaster's foliage makes its head sometimes too heavy.

The Cluster Pine also is a beautiful tree, and approaches perhaps as near the Stone Pine as the Pinaster does. But I scarce recollect ever to have seen it in a state of full maturity and perfection. If we may judge, however, from a growth of thirty or forty years (at which age I have often seen it), it shoots in so wild and irregular a manner, so thick, rich and bushy, that we may easily conceive how picturesque a plant it must be in a state of full perfection. Its cones, too, which it bears in clusters, from whence it derives its name, are a great ornament to it. In composition, indeed, such minutiae are of little value; but we are now considering trees as individuals.

The Pinaster and the Cluster Pine are one and the

same tree (*Pinus pinaster*), and it is curious that Gilpin should have referred to them as distinct. His mistake may possibly have arisen on account of its irregular growth, and from the fact, perhaps, of his having made the acquaintance of the tree under each of its common names and under differing circumstances of growth.—Ed.

The Weymouth Pine has very little picturesque beauty to recommend it. It is admired for its polished bark. The painter's eye pays little attention to so trivial a circumstance, even when the tree is considered as a single object. Nay, its polished bark rather depreciates its value: for the picturesque eye dwells with more pleasure on rough surfaces than on smooth: it sees more richness in them and more variety. But we object, chiefly, to the Weymouth Pine on account of the regularity of its stem, and the meagreness of its foliage. Its stem rises with perpendicular exactness: it rarely varies; and its branches issue, with equal formality, from its sides. Its foliage too is thin, and wants both richness and effect. If I were speaking, indeed, of this tree in composition, I might add, that it may often appear to great advantage in a plantation. Contrast, we



know, produces beauty even from deformity itself. Opposed therefore to the wildness of other trees, the regularity of the Weymouth Pine may have its beauty. Its formality may be concealed. A few of its branches, hanging from a mass of heavier foliage, may appear light and feathery, while its spiry head may often form an agreeable apex to a clump.

Having thus considered the Pine race, we next take a view of a tribe nearly allied to them—that of Firs. In what the distinction between these two tribes consists (though I apprehend it consists in little more than in that between genus and species), the botanist will explain. I profess myself an observer only of outward characters. What we usually call the Scotch Fir appears to me to approach nearer the Pine in its manner of growth, than it does any of its nominal class. As this tree, therefore, seems to be of ambiguous nature, at least as to its form, I shall place it here—that is immediately after the Pines, and before the Firs, that it may with facility join one party or the other, as the reader's botanical principles incline.

Botanically (according to the arrangement of modern authorities) the Pines—or those trees amongst the order of Conifers included under the genus *Pinus*—are distinguished from the Firs (comprised under the genus *Abies*) by the greater length of their needle-shaped leaves, and by the grouping of the latter in sheaths enclosing two, three, and sometimes five individuals. These sheaths enclose the groups of leaves at their bases only. In the genus *Abies* the leaves are solitary, sometimes growing equally upon all sides of the twigs, and sometimes arranged in rows on each side. Another feature distinguishing *Pinus* from *Abies* consists in the circumstance that, in the former, the cones grow erect on the twigs, whilst, in the latter, they are pendulous. The Scotch *Fir*, as it is popularly called, is, in reality, a Pine, being the *Pinus sylvestris* of modern scientific nomenclature.—ED.

The Scotch Fir is supposed to be the only indigenous terebinthine tree in this island; and yet, though it abounds, and, when seen in perfection, is a very picturesque tree, we have little idea of its beauty. It is generally treated with great contempt. It is a hardy plant, and therefore put to every servile office. If you wish to screen your house from the south-west wind, plant Scotch Firs, and plant them close and thick. If you want to shelter a nursery of young trees, plant

Scotch Firs ; and the phrase is, you may afterwards *weed them out* as you please. This is ignominious. I wish not to rob society of these hardy services from the Scotch Fir, nor do I mean to set it in competition with many of the trees of the forest, which, in their infant state, it is accustomed to shelter ; all I mean is, to rescue it from the disgrace of being thought fit for nothing else, and to establish its character as a picturesque tree. For myself, I admire its foliage—both the colour of the leaf, and its mode of growth. Its ramification, too, is irregular and beautiful, and not unlike that of the Stone Pine, which it resembles also in the easy sweep of its stem, and, likewise, in the colour of the bark, which is commonly, as it attains age, of a rich reddish brown. The Scotch Fir indeed, in its stripling state, is less an object of beauty. Its pointed and spiry shoots, during the first years of its growth, are formal ; and yet I have sometimes seen a good contrast produced between its spiry points, and the round-headed Oaks and Elms in its neighbourhood. When I speak, however, of the Scotch Fir as a beautiful individual, I conceive it,

when it has outgrown all the more unpleasant circumstances of its youth—when it has completed its full age—and when, like Ezekiel's Cedar, it has formed its *head among the thick branches*. I may be singular in my attachment to the Scotch Fir ; I know it has many enemies, and that may perhaps induce me to be more compassionate to it : however, I wish my opinion in its favour may weigh no more than the reasons I give to support it.

The great contempt, indeed, in which the Scotch Fir is commonly held, arises, I believe, from two causes.

People object first to its colour. Its dark, murky hue, we are told, is displeasing. With regard to *colour in general*, I think I speak the language of painting when I assert, that the picturesque eye makes little distinction in this matter. It has no attachment to one colour in preference to another, but considers the beauty of all colouring as resulting, not from the colours themselves, but almost entirely from their harmony with other colours in their neighbourhood. So that, as the Fir Tree is supported, combined, or stationed, it forms a pleasing tint or a murky spot.

A second source of that contempt in which the Scotch Fir is commonly held, is our rarely seeing it in a picturesque state. Scotch Firs are seldom planted as *single trees*, or in a *judicious group*; but generally in *close, compact bodies*, in thick array, which suffocates or cramps them, and if they ever get loose from this bondage, they are already ruined. Their lateral branches are gone, and their stems are drawn into poles, on which their heads appear stuck as on a centre. Whereas if the tree had grown in its natural state, all mischief had been prevented. Its stem would have taken an easy sweep, and its lateral branches, which naturally grow with as much beautiful irregularity as those of deciduous trees, would have hung loosely and negligently; and the more so, as there is something peculiarly light and feathery in its foliage. I mean not to assert that every Scotch Fir, though in a natural state, would possess these beauties; but it would at least have the chance of other trees, and I have seen it, though indeed but rarely, in such a state as to equal in beauty the most elegant Stone Pine.

All trees, indeed, crowded together, naturally

rise in perpendicular stems; but the Fir has this peculiar disadvantage, that its lateral branches, once injured, never shoot again. A grove of crowded saplings—Elms, Beeches, or almost of any deciduous trees—when thinned, will throw out new lateral branches, and, in time, recover a state of beauty; but if the education of the Fir has been neglected, he is lost for ever.

Some of the most picturesque trees of this kind perhaps in England, adorn Mr. Lenthall's deserted and ruinous mansion of Basilsleigh, in Berkshire. The soil is a deep, but rich sand, which seems to be adapted to them; and, as they are here at perfect liberty, they not only become large and noble trees, but expand themselves likewise in all the careless forms of Nature. Very noble Scotch Firs, also, may be seen at Thirkleby, near Thirsk, in Yorkshire. Nor has any man, I think, a right to depreciate the Scotch Fir till he has seen it in a perfect state of Nature.

An undoubted claim can be made, by those who have seen it in a perfect state of nature, to rank the Scotch Fir (*Pinus sylvestris*) as both a beautiful and a picturesque tree. Yet, the popular prejudice against it, referred to by

Gilpin still exists, in a certain degree, in England : and nothing, perhaps, has tended more to increase that prejudice during recent years than the proceedings adopted by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests in dealing with the beautiful woodlands endeared to the Author of this 'Forest Scenery' by an acquaintance extending over a long period of years. Since 1851 and until the work of destruction was condemned by the united voice of public opinion, and finally stopped by Parliament, great tracts of the New Forest were cleared of their magnificent growths of ancient and picturesque trees to make room for monotonous plantations of Scotch Fir. This tree, therefore, is associated, in the public mind, with attempts to destroy the most beautiful remnants of primeval wood existing in this country, and to wrest from the people of England one of the dearest and most prized of the heritages of ancient times. Mr. E. K. Lenthall, of Bessels Leigh Manor (a descendant of Speaker Lenthall), informs us that one only of the Scotch Firs at Bessels Leigh is now standing, and that it (with the others, which were cut down by his grandfather, about the year 1800) was 'probably planted either by Speaker Lenthall or his son, Sir Charles Lenthall, in the reign of Charles I.' Of the Thirkleby Firs—we learn from the Rev. T. H. Smith, the vicar of the parish—there are still standing at least seventeen or eighteen in the Park, the seat of Sir W. P. Gallwey, Bart.—Ed.

The Spruce Fir is generally esteemed a more

beautiful and elegant tree than the Scotch Fir; and the reason, I suppose, is because it often feathers to the ground, and grows in a more exact and regular shape. But this, in a picturesque light, is a principal objection to it. It wants both form and variety. We admire its floating foliage, in which it sometimes exceeds all other trees; but it is rather disagreeable to see a repetition of these feathery strata, beautiful as they are, reared, tier above tier, in regular order, from the bottom of a tree to the top. Its perpendicular stem, also, which has seldom any lineal variety, makes the appearance of the tree still more formal.

It is not always, however, that the Spruce Fir grows with so much regularity. Sometimes a lateral branch, taking the lead, breaks somewhat through the order commonly observed, and forms a few chasms, which have a good effect. When this is the case the Spruce Fir ranks among picturesque trees. Sometimes the effect is as good, and, in many circumstances, better, when the contrast appears still stronger—when the tree is shattered by some accident, has lost many of



its branches, and is scathed and ragged. A feathery branch here and there, among broken stumps, has often a good effect, but it must arise from the wild situation of the tree. On an embellished lawn it would be improper. In all circumstances, however, the Spruce Fir appears best either as a single tree, or unmixed with any of its fellows, for neither it, nor any of the spear-headed race, will ever form a beautiful clump without the assistance of other trees.

The Silver Fir has very little to boast in point of picturesque beauty. It has all the regularity of the Spruce, but without its floating foliage. There is a sort of harsh, stiff, unbending formality in the stem, the branches, and in the whole economy of the tree, which makes it disagreeable. We rarely see it, even in the happiest state, assume a picturesque shape. Assisted it may be in its form, when broken and shattered, but it will rarely get rid of its formality. In old age it stands the best chance of attaining beauty. We sometimes see it under that circumstance, shattered by winds, adorned with Ivy, and shooting out a few horizontal branches, on which its meagre

foliage and tufted moss appear to advantage. I may add, that the Silver Fir is perhaps the hardiest of its tribe. It will out-face the south-west wind ; it will bear without shrinking even the sea-air ; so that one advantage, at least, attends a plantation of Silver Firs ; you may have it, where you can have no other, and a plantation of Silver Firs may be better than no plantation at all. At the same time I have heard that it is nice in its soil, and that an improver may be liable to disappointment who plants it in ground where the Oak will not thrive.

I know of no other species of Fir in England that is worth mentioning. The Hemlock Spruce is a beautiful loose plant, but it never, I believe, attains any size ; and the Newfoundland, or Black Spruce, is another dwarfish tree. In that character, however, it is often beautiful, and its small red cones are an ornament to it. In the vast Pine forests of North America, and in those which hang beetling over the cliffs of the Baltic, the picturesque eye might probably see many a grand production of the Fir kind which is hitherto little known, or, if known, would appear there in so improved a character, as to seem wholly new. In

the northern parts of Asia, also, and in the southern parts of Africa, I doubt not but the Fir may be found in great variety and perfection. In Philip's voyage to Botany Bay, we are told of Pines in Norfolk Island of an immense size. Later accounts make some of these Pines, which have been measured by a quadrant, to have attained the wonderful height of two hundred and thirty feet. They bear cones; but the wood, from a sample brought into England (in the possession of Sir Joseph Banks), does not appear like deal, but is much heavier, the grain considerably closer, and the colour browner. The girth of the tree, from which this sample was cut, was eighteen feet. The first branches were at the elevation of thirty yards, but I could not learn whether this circumstance was a general character of the tree, or peculiar only to that individual. Strabo, indeed, tells us that the Fir is wholly a European plant—that it is never to be met with in any part of Asia—and that it may even be considered, in all those places where Europe and Asia border on each other, as a distinguishing mark of European ground. On the Asiatic side of the Tanais, he

tells us, it is never found, though on the European side it is so common, that the Scythians, who inhabit those parts, use it always in making arrows. He treats Eratosthenes with some contempt for asserting that when Alexander was in India, he used Fir in constructing his navy.\* Strabo's accuracy is generally much respected, but in this instance his observations seem to have been confined. There is little doubt, I think, that the Fir abounded in many parts of Asia: it was probably as much a native of Mount Lebanon, as the Cedar itself.†

Neither the Hemlock Spruce (*Abies canadensis*) nor the Black Spruce (*Abies nigra*) can be properly described as 'dwarfish,' as they reach a height of seventy or eighty feet, the latter sometimes rising a hundred feet.—ED.

After the Pine and Fir tribes, the Yew deserves our notice. The Yew is a pure native of Britain, and was formerly what the Oak is now, the basis

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\* See lib. ii., p. 510, edit. Caus.

† After all, however, it is probable that the word *ελατη*, which the Latins translate *abies*, and we translate *fir*, might appear to be somewhat very different from the tree which we call a fir, if we had a Grecian botanist to consult.

of our strength. Of it the old English yeoman made his long-bow, which, hevaunted, nobody but an Englishman could bend. In shooting he did not, as in other nations, keep his left hand steady, and draw his bow with his right; but, keeping his right at rest upon the nerve, he pressed the whole weight of his body into the horns of his bow.\* Hence probably arose the English phrase of *bending a bow*, and the French of *drawing one*.

Nor is the Yew celebrated only for its toughness and elasticity, but also for its durable nature. Where your paling is most exposed either to winds or springs, strengthen it with a post of old Yew. That hardy veteran fears neither storms above nor damps below. It is a common saying among the inhabitants of New Forest, that a post of Yew will outlast a post of iron.

Thus much for the utility and dignity of the Yew. As to its picturesque perfections, I profess myself (contrary I suppose to general opinion) a great admirer of its form and foliage. The Yew is of all other trees the most tonsile. Hence all

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\* See Bp. Latimer's Sermons, Sermon vi.

the indignities it suffers. We everywhere see it cut and metamorphosed into such a variety of deformities, that we are hardly brought to conceive it has a natural shape, or the power, which other trees have, of hanging with ease. Yet it has this power in a great degree, and, in a state of Nature, except in exposed situations, is perhaps one of the most beautiful evergreens we have. Indeed, I know not whether, all things considered, it is not superior to the Cedar of Lebanon itself—I mean to such meagre representatives of that noble plant as we have in England. The same soil which cramps the Cedar is congenial to the Yew.

It is but seldom, however, that we see the Yew in perfection. In New Forest it formerly abounded, but it is now much scarcer. It does not rank among timber trees, and being thus, in a degree, unprivileged, and unprotected by forest laws, it has often been made booty of by those who durst not lay violent hands on the Oak, or the Ash. But still, in many parts of the forest, some noble specimens of this tree are left. One I have often visited, which is a tree of peculiar beauty. It immediately divides into several massy limbs,

each of which, hanging in grand loose foliage, spreads over a large compass of ground, and yet the whole tree forms a close, compact body : that is, its boughs are not so separated, as to break into distinct parts. It cannot boast the size of the Yew tree at Fotheringal, near Taymouth in Scotland, which measures fifty-six feet and a half in circumference : nor indeed the size of many others on record ; but it has sufficient size for all the purposes of landscape, and in point of picturesque beauty it probably equals any of them. It stands not far from the banks of Lymington river, on the left bank as you look towards the sea, between Roydon Farm and Boldre Church. It occupies a small knoll, surrounded with other trees, some of which are Yews, but of inferior beauty. A little stream washes the base of the knoll and winding round forms it into a peninsula. If any one should have curiosity to visit it from this description, and by the help of these landmarks, I doubt not but he may find it, at any time, within the space of these two or three centuries, in great perfection if it suffer no external injury. If such trees were common, they would

recover the character of the Yew Tree among the admirers of picturesque beauty.

But though we should be able to establish its beauty with respect to form and foliage, there remains one point still, which we should find it hard to combat. Its colour unfortunately gives offence. Its dingy, funereal hue, people say, makes it fit only for a churchyard.

This objection, I hope, I have already answered in defending the colour of the Scotch Fir.\* An attachment to colour, as such, seems to me an indication of false taste. Hence arise the numerous absurdities of gaudy decoration. In the same manner, a dislike to any particular colour shows a squeamishness which should as little be encouraged. Indeed, when you have only one colour to deal with, as in painting the wainscot of your room, the eye, properly enough, gives a preference to some soft, pleasant tint in opposition to a glaring, bold one ; but when colours act in concert (as is the case in all scenery), red, blue, yellow, light-green, or dingy green, are all alike.

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\* See page 116.



The virtue of each consists solely in its agreement with its neighbours.

I have only to add in commendation of this tree, that its veins exceed in beauty those of most other trees. Tables made of Yew, when the grain is fine, are much superior to Mahogany; and its root vies in beauty with the ancient Citron.

The famous Yew at Fortingall (Gilpin spells the word Fotheringal) is still in existence, and we have been favoured by Mr. James Gaudie, of Perth, with some interesting particulars of it, gathered during a visit which he paid to it in 1876. He found, he says, very little of the original tree existing, 'there being only about seven or eight feet of the trunk still standing, or rather reclining, on the dyke which now encloses it from the further inroads of relic hunters.' 'It stands,' he adds, 'at the end of the parish church, in the burying ground.' What remains of it now, however, affords but little indication of the enormous proportions it is said once to have possessed. Round the trunk, and from the remains of the trunk, shoots have sprung up, and are growing luxuriantly to a height of about fifteen or twenty feet, bidding fair, in time, to rival the venerable antiquity of the parent tree.' This singularly ancient sylvan ruin is computed to be between 2500 and 2700 years of age! The Rev. Edward H. Elers, the present vicar of Boldre, and the occupier of

Gilpin's 'Vicar's Hill,' informs us that the yew referred to by Gilpin as being 'of peculiar beauty,' and as growing between Roydon Farm and Boldre Church, is still 'in a flourishing condition,' and 'stands isolated as before.' It is situated, he tells us, 'about one hundred yards beyond the mill on the church side.'—ED.

The Ilex, or Evergreen Oak, presents a character very different from that of the Yew. The Yew is a close-bodied, compact tree. The Ilex is generally thin and straggling, though we sometimes see it, in soils which it likes, form a thicker foliage. Both the Yew and the Ilex are beautiful, but in different ways. As an individual, the Yew is greatly superior. It is an object to admire. The beauty of the Ilex arises chiefly from situation and contrast.

Under this head may be classed another Oak, nearly an evergreen, a late production of singular origin, called the Luccomb Oak, from the person who raised it. It was produced from an acorn of the common Turkey Oak—from which all the Luccomb Oaks have been *grafted*—as I understand the seed of accidental varieties never produce the same plant. I have heard much of the beauty of this tree, and of the acquisition it will be to

winter scenery, by the introduction of a new and beautiful evergreen. It may be so. Its growth, I am told, is rapid. But from the few plants I have seen of this stock, and those but young, no judgment can well be formed.

The Holly can hardly be called a tree, though it is a large shrub. It is a plant, however, of singular beauty. Mr. Evelyn, in his 'Sylva,' cries out with rapture: 'Is there under heaven a more glorious and refreshing object of the kind than an impenetrable hedge of about four hundred feet in length, nine feet high, and five in diameter, which I can show in my garden at Say's Court, at any time of the year, glittering with its armed and varnished leaves; the taller standards at orderly distances blushing with their natural coral—shorn and fashioned into columns and pilasters, architecturally shaped, at due distance?'

Though we cannot accord with the learned naturalist in the whole of this rapturous encomium on the hedge at Say's Court, yet in part we agree with him, and admire, as much as he does, the Holly *glittering with its armed and varnished leaves, and blushing with its natural coral.*

But we could wish to recommend it not in a hedge but in a forest, where, mixed with Oak or Ash, or other trees of the wood, it contributes to form the most beautiful scenes, blending itself with the trunks and skeletons of the winter, or with the varied greens of summer. But in its combined state we shall have occasion hereafter to mention it. At present we shall only observe that, as far as an individual bush can be beautiful, the Holly is extremely so. It has, besides, to recommend it, that it is among the hardiest and stoutest plants of English growth. It thrives in all soils and situations. At Dungeness, in Kent, I have heard, it flourishes even among the pebbles of the beach.

Our British Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) can fully claim the honour of being called a tree, though, ordinarily, it is seen only as a shrub. Some of the finest examples of its tree growths are to be found in the New Forest. But what are now trees in that beautiful woodland were probably shrubs only in Gilpin's time. Specimens with trunks from three to five feet in circumference are plentiful, and we recently saw and measured one Holly near Lyndhurst with a girth near the ground of nine feet ! We heartily agree with Gilpin, in his admiration of the beauty of *Ilex*

*aquifolium*, and we prefer to see it, as he does, growing not in a thick-set and impenetrable hedge of a regular length, breadth, and height, but in the freedom of the forest. On the beach called the Holmestone, within the district of Dungeness, there is still a very large number of Holly bushes growing. Within the memory of persons still living in the neighbourhood, there were large Holly trees there, but they have been cut down and carried away, and the highest of those now existing do not exceed fifteen feet. It is believed that these Hollies were originally planted on this beach, and it is said that at one time herons used to build their nests in them.—Ed.

The Hawthorn should not entirely be passed over amidst the minuter plants of the forest, though it has little claim to picturesque beauty. In song, indeed, the shepherd may with propriety

‘ Tell his tale  
Under the Hawthorn in the dale.’

But when the scenes of Nature are presented to the eye, it is but a poor appendage. Its shape is bad. It does not taper and point like the Holly, but is rather a matted, round, heavy bush. Its fragrance indeed is great; but its bloom, which is the source of that fragrance, is spread over it in too much profusion. It becomes a mere white

sheet—a bright spot, which is seldom found in harmony with the objects around it. In autumn the Hawthorn makes its best appearance. Its glowing berries produce a rich tint, which often adds great beauty to the corner of a wood or the side of some crowded clump.

We must here venture to differ from our Author in his estimation of the Hawthorn; for we consider it, not as a 'poor appendage' to the scenes of Nature, but as amongst one of the most picturesque. Nor is it a bush merely, though commonly seen in this form, but a tree of fair dimensions when growing in a forest. We have indeed seen some fine specimens of *Crataegus oxyacantha* in the New Forest and also in Epping Forest, and have been struck by the remarkable picturesqueness of their gnarled and twisted stems and branches. Sir Dick Lauder, in the edition of the 'Forest Scenery,' which he published in 1834, mentions a large Hawthorn growing near the village of Duddingstone, in the county of Edinburgh. He says he measured this tree in the year 1818, and found it, at three feet above the root, nine feet in girth, and, a little way above the roots, twelve feet round! The Hawthorn too, is, we think, extremely beautiful in leaf, flower, and fruit, and one of the most delightful sights in the forest, in the early spring, is that afforded by the contrast between the golden green foliage of the Hawthorn and the more sombre colours of the woodland.—Ed.

## SECTION V.

### SPRAY AND FOLIAGE.



WE have thus endeavoured to mark the *principal characteristics* of picturesque beauty, in the most common trees we have in England. But to have a more accurate idea of their *nice peculiarities and distinctions*, we should examine their smaller parts with a little more precision—their ramification in winter, as well as the mass of foliage which they exhibit in summer.

Their ramification, in part, we have already considered; but it has only been that of the larger boughs, which support the foliage, and such as we commonly see under the masses of it when in full leaf. Winter discovers the nicer

parts of the ramification—the little tender spray on which the hanging of the foliage and the peculiar character of the tree so much depend.

The study is certainly useful. It is true it has none of the larger parts of painting for its object—composition—or the massing of light and shade: but we consider it as necessary for those to understand, who wish either to be acquainted with the *particular character* of each tree, or its *general effect*.

Nor is it an unpleasing study. There is much variety in the ramification of each species; and much also in that of each individual. We see everywhere so many elegant lines, so much opposition and rich intersection among them, that there are few more beautiful objects in Nature, than the ramification of a tree. For myself, I am in doubt whether an old, rough, interwoven Oak, merely as a *single object*, has not as much beauty in winter, as in summer. In summer it has unquestionably more effect; but, in point of simple beauty and amusement, I think I should almost prefer it in winter.



If a man were disposed to moralize, the ramification and spray of a thriving tree afford a good theme. Nothing gives a happier idea of busy life. Industry and activity pervade every part. Wherever an opening, how minute soever, appears, there some little knot of busy adventurers push in and form a settlement: so that the whole is everywhere full and complete. There too, as is common in all communities, are many little elbowings, justlings, thwartings, and oppositions, in which some gain and others lose.\*

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\* As a continuation of this moralizing strain, the following short allegory ventures to appear in a note:—

Ut sylvæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos;

Prima cadunt; ita——

Debemur morti nos, nostraque——

As I sat carelessly at my window and threw my eyes upon a large Acacia which grew before me, I conceived it might aptly represent a country divided into provinces, towns, and families. The larger branches might hold out the first, the smaller branches, connected with them, the second, and those combinations of collateral leaves, which specify the Acacia, might represent families composed of individuals. It was now late in the year, and the autumnal tint had taken possession of great part of the tree.

As I sat looking at it, many of the yellow leaves (which having been produced earlier, decayed sooner) were continually

In examining the spray of trees, I shall confine myself to the Oak, the Ash, the Elm, and the

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dropping into the lap of their great mother. Here was an emblem of natural decay—the most obvious appearance of mortality.

As I continued looking, a gentle breeze rustled among the leaves. Many fell, which in a natural course might have enjoyed life longer. Here malady was added to decay.

The blast increased; and every branch that presented itself bowed before it. A shower of leaves covered the ground. 'The cup of vengeance,' said I, 'is poured out upon the people. Pestilence shakes the land. Nature sickens in the gale. They fall by multitudes. Whole families are cut off together.'

Among the branches was one entirely withered. The leaves were shrivelled; yet clinging to it. Here was an emblem of famine. The nutriment of life was stopped. Existence was just supported: but every form was emaciated and shrunk.

In the neighbourhood stretched a branch, not only shrivelled and withered, but, having been more exposed to winds, was stripped almost entirely of its leaves. Here and there hung a solitary leaf, just enough to show that the whole had lately been alive. 'Ah!' said I, 'here is an emblem of depopulation. Some violent cause hath laid waste the land. Towns and villages, as well as families, are desolated. Scarce ten are left to bemoan a thousand.'

How does everything around us bring its lesson to our minds! Nature is the great book of God. In every page is instruction to those who read. Mortality must claim its due. Death in various shapes hovers round us. Thus far went the heathen moralist. He had learned no other knowledge from these perishing forms of Nature, but that men, like trees, are subject to death.

Beech. It would be endless to run through the whole forest. Nor is it necessary. The examination of these few principal trees will show how consequential a part the spray is in fixing the *character* of the tree. There is as much difference in the spray as there is in the foliage, or in any other particular. At the same time, if a painter be accurate, in a *certain degree*, in his delineation of some of the more capital trees, in others his accuracy is of little consequence: nay an endeavour at precision would be stiff and pedantic.

In the spray of the four species of trees just mentioned and, I doubt not, in that of all other trees, Nature seems to observe one simple principle, which is, that the mode of growth in the

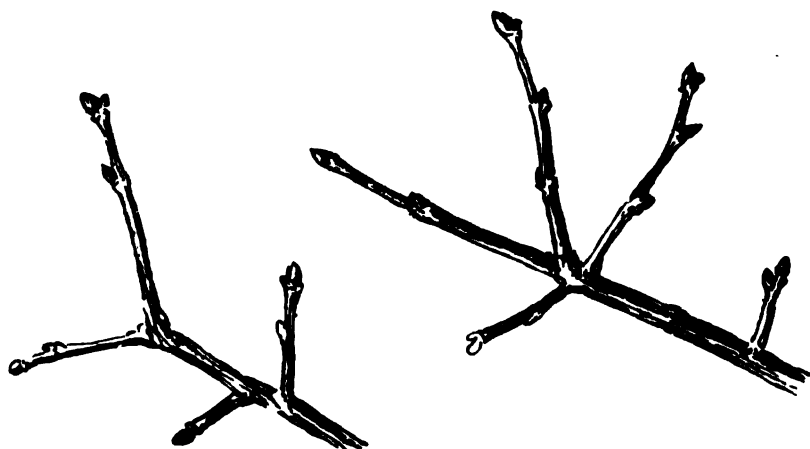
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Ita

Debemur morti nos, nostraque—

Better instructed, learn thou a nobler lesson. Learn, that that God who with the blast of winter shrivels the tree, and with the breezes of spring restores it, offers it to thee as an emblem of thy hopes. The same God presides over the natural and moral world. His works are uniform. The truths which *Nature* teaches, as far as they go, are the truths of *revelation* also. It is written in both these books that that power which revives the tree will revive thee also, like it, with increasing perfection.

spray corresponds exactly with that of the larger branches, of which, indeed, the spray is the origin. Thus the Oak divides his boughs from the stem more horizontally than most other deciduous trees. The spray makes exactly, in miniature, the same appearance. It breaks out in right angles, or in angles that are nearly so, forming its shoots, commonly, in short lines, the second year's shoot usually taking some direction contrary to that of the first. Thus the rudiments are laid of that abrupt mode of ramification for which the Oak is remarkable. When two shoots spring from the same knot they are commonly of unequal length, and one, with large strides, generally takes the lead. Very often also three shoots, and sometimes four, spring from the same knot. Hence the spray of the Oak becomes thick, close, and interwoven; so that, at a little distance, it has a full, rich appearance, and more of the picturesque roughness than we observe in the spray of any other tree. The spray of the Oak, also, generally springs in such directions as give its branches that horizontal appearance which they generally assume.



Spray of the Oak.

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Ramification of the Oak.

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Spray of the Ash.

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Ramification of the Ash.

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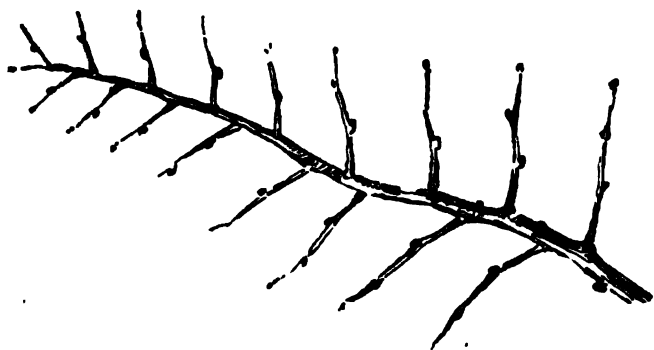
The spray of the Ash is very different. As the boughs of the Ash are less complex, so is its spray. Instead of the thick, intermingled bushiness which the spray of the Oak exhibits, that of the Ash is much more simple, running in a kind of irregular parallels. The main stem holds its course, forming at the same time a beautiful sweep; but the spray does not divide like that of the Oak, from the extremity of the last year's shoot, but springs from the sides of it. Two shoots spring out opposite to each other, and each pair in a contrary direction. Rarely, however, both the shoots of either side come to maturity; one of them is commonly lost as the tree increases, or, at least, makes no appearance in comparison with the other, which takes the lead. So that, notwithstanding this natural regularity of growth, (so injurious to the beauty of the Spruce Fir and some other trees), the Ash never contracts the least disgusting formality from it. It may even receive great picturesque beauty, for sometimes the whole branch is lost as far as one of the lateral shoots, and this occasions a kind of rectangular junction, which forms a beautiful

contrast with the other spray, and gives an elegant mode of hanging to the tree.

This points out another difference between the spray of the Oak and that of the Ash. The spray of the Oak seldom shoots from the undersides of the branches ; and it is this, chiefly, which keeps the branches in a horizontal form. But the spray of the Ash, often breaking out on the underside of the branch, forms very elegant pendent boughs.

The branch of the Elm has neither the strength nor the various abrupt twistings of the Oak, nor does it shoot so much in horizontal directions. Such also is the spray. It has a more regular appearance, not starting off at right angles, but forming its shoots more acutely with the parent branch.

Neither does the spray of the Elm shoot like that of the Ash, in regular pairs, from the same knot, but in a kind of alternacy. It has generally, at first, a flat appearance ; but, as one year's shoot is added to another, it has not strength to support itself ; and, as the tree grows old, it often becomes pendent also, like the Ash : whereas the toughness



Spray of the Elm.

[Page 146.]



Spray of the Beech.

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Ramification of the Beech.

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and strength of the Oak enable it to stretch out its branches horizontally to the very last twig. I have seen an Oak with pendent branches, but it is not common.

The spray of the Beech observes the same kind of alternacy as that of the Elm; but it shoots in angles still more acute, the distance between each twig is wider, and it forms a kind of zigzag course.

We esteem the Beech, also, in some degree a pendent tree as well as the Ash; but there is a wide difference between them. The Ash is a light, airy tree, and its spray hangs in elegant, loose foliage; but the hanging spray of the Beech, in old trees especially, is often twisted and intermingled disagreeably, and has a perplexed, matted appearance. The whole tree gives us something of the idea of an entangled head of bushy hair, from which, here and there, hangs a disorderly lock; while the spray of the Ash, like hair neither neglected nor finically nice, has nothing squalid in it, and yet hangs in loose and easy curls.

The spray of trees puts on different appear-

ances as the spring advances. When their buds begin to swell, most of them push out a bloom which overspreads them with great richness. But of all others, the Ash presents the most singular and beautiful aspect. About the end of March or the beginning of April, it throws out a knotty bloom which, opening gradually, not only enriches the spray, but is itself one of the most beautiful among the miniature appearances of Nature. The seminal stems are of an olive tint, and each of them is tipped with a black seed. Often, too, the spray of the Ash is enriched by the ragged remnants of the keys and tongues of the last year, which, mixed with the bloom, have a good effect.

The Elm, too, throws out a beautiful bloom, in form of a spicated ball, about the bigness of a nutmeg, of a dark crimson colour. This bloom sometimes blows in such profusion as to thicken and enrich the spray exceedingly, even to the fulness almost of foliage. It is not, however, often seen in such perfection. In the spring of the year 1776 it was more than commonly profuse. Indeed the bloom of forest trees in

general is rarely annual; it appears in profusion only every second or third year, and even then seldom all the trees of the same kind bloom at once. Thus, when you look into a grove of Oaks, about the beginning of May, you will suppose, perhaps, that some are much forwarder in leaf than others, whereas, in fact, this appearance chiefly arises from their being in bloom—their little pensile catkins hanging in knots, adorned with tufts of young leaves.

Having thus made a few observations on the forms of trees, their different modes of growth and other peculiarities, I should add that I am far from supposing Nature to act always in *exact* conformity to the appearances which I have here marked. In the *general mode of growth* which each species observes, no doubt she is uniform; but in the *particular manner* in which the stem rises, the branches shoot, the foliage hangs, and, indeed, if I may so speak, in the specific character of each individual, many circumstances will make a difference, soil and climate especially. These have the same effect on the form of trees which they have on animal life. We not only see distant

parts of the earth, but even contiguous countries exhibit varieties in the same species of animals. The English and Scotch horse are very different creatures; and, as climates and soils are still more connected with trees than with animals, we may observe a greater difference produced within a smaller distance. The Oak of one country differs in form from the Oak of another. In one, it carries an erect stem for many yards from the ground; in another, its branches begin quickly to divide and straggle. In the former situation, the foliage may be thick and interwoven; in the latter, it may be thin and meagre. The observations therefore which we have made on the form of trees cannot, in many minute circumstances, be supposed to suit the *individuals* of every country. They were chiefly made on the trees of New Forest in Hampshire, the soil of which, in general, is a hungry gravel or a cold clay.



## SECTION VI.

### CELEBRATED TREES.



SHOULD now dismiss the subject of trees as *individuals*, and hasten to consider them in a *combined state*, in which they will appear to most advantage; but, as many trees, as well as men, have distinguished themselves in the world, it seemed proper to dedicate a few pages to the particular mention of some of these celebrated characters, before I conclude that part of my treatise which is professedly written to do honour to *single trees*.

But first, it cannot be enough lamented by the lovers of landscape that we meet with so few of these noble characters. Trees, indeed, sufficient

for all the purposes of *distant scenery*, we often find; but a tree in full perfection, as a grand object to grace a *foreground*, is rarely seen. Wherever trees can be turned to profit, they are commonly cut down, long before they attain picturesque perfection. The beauty of almost every species of tree increases after its prime; and, unless it have the good fortune to stand in some place of difficult access, or under the protection of some patron whose mansion it adorns, we rarely see it in that grandeur and dignity which it would acquire by age.

Gilpin's lament might, unfortunately, be truthfully re-echoed in our own day. In few places, indeed, can we now find trees in full perfection except where they are 'under the protection of some patron,' whose mansion they adorn, or who takes a pride in possessing and preserving them; or when they stand in some public park or in the few woodlands which are still left to us. So called 'utility'—which is often another name for private or corporate greed—is very commonly made an excuse for the destruction of beautiful trees. Many of the trees which still remain with us in public places owe their existence to the large-hearted efforts of public-spirited individuals who, however, are seldom successful in saving noble trees except by the matter-of-fact method of purchasing their

redemption of the owners and would-be destroyers. Happily, it is not difficult to discern that a better spirit is getting abroad, and we hope that before very long the desire for tree planting and preservation may everywhere overcome the mania for cutting them down.—Ed.

Some of the noblest Oaks in England were at least formerly found in Sussex. They required sometimes a score of oxen to draw them, and were carried in a sort of wain, which in that deep country is expressively called a *tug*. Two or three years was not an uncommon space of time for a tree to spend in performing its journey to Chatham. One tug carried the load but a little way, and left it for another tug to take up. If the rains set in, it stirred no more that year; and, sometimes, no part of the next summer was dry enough for the tug to proceed. So that the timber was generally pretty well seasoned before it arrived at the king's yard. I suppose the same mode of carriage still continues.\*

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\* To the lover of landscape it is almost a matter of regret that the circumstances of the time are now so vastly altered as, by the greatly increased facilities of land carriage, to make it so much more easy than it used to be to compass the destruction and removal of trees.—Ed.

In this fallen state alone, it is true, the tree becomes the basis of England's glory. Though we regret its fall, therefore, we must not repine, but address the children of the wood as the gallant Oak, on his removal from the forest, is said to have addressed the scion by his side :—

' Where thy great grandsire spread his awful shade,  
A holy druid mystic circles made.  
Myself a sapling, when thy grandsire bore  
Intrepid Edward to the Gallic shore.  
Me now my country calls : Adieu, my son,  
And as the circling years in order run,  
May'st thou, renown'd, the forest's boast and pride,  
Victorious in some future contest ride.'

Nobody, that I know, has more pathetically lamented the fall of trees than the elegant Vanier. Whoever has a taste for the subject will be gratified by the following quotation :—

' Neque enim villis accedere major  
Possit honos, densâ quam nubilus arbore lucus.  
Sylvarum studiosa, suos cum Gallia quondam  
Vix aleret cives, patriâ migrare relictâ,  
Atque peregrinos alio deferre penates  
Maluit, excisis victum quam quærere sylvis.  
Hæc ubi jam nemorum reverentia tanta, bipennes  
Ut teneat ? nostros ubi grandior ulla per agros  
Quercus ad annosam, ferri secura, senectam

Durat? inaccessis nisi consita montibus, ipso  
 Se defensa loco tueatur: si qua supersunt  
 A patribus nemora ad seros transmissa nepotes,  
 Illa nec æstivo frondent impervia soli,  
 Nobile nec cœlo caput abdunt, qualia quondam  
 Vulgus adorabat truncis procera verendis.  
 Sed veteri de stirpe, novo surgentia ramo,  
 Et quatuor post lustra nigros visura caminos,  
 Vix lepori hospitium præbent, sylvestribus olim  
 Quæ timidas latebris damas ursosque tegebant.  
 Ecquis honos ruris, nemorum si gratia desit;  
 Obsessusque domi maneat, cum Sirius ardens  
 Debacchatur agris; viridique sub ilicis umbrâ  
 Irriguo possis nec tradere fessa sopori  
 Membra, nec æstivos ramorum frigore soles  
 Frangere, nec taciti per amica silentia luci,  
 Multisonos avium concentus inter, ad aptos  
 Sponte suâ veniens numeros, contexere carmen.\*

Gilpin's translation of these lines is as follows:—

'No greater beauty can adorn  
 The hamlet, than a grove of ancient Oak.  
 Ah! how unlike their sires of elder times  
 The sons of Gallia now! They, in each tree,  
 Dreading some unknown power, dared not to lift  
 An axe: though scant of soil, they rather sought  
 For distant herbage than molest their groves.  
 Now all is spoil and violence. Where now  
 Exists an Oak whose venerable stem  
 Has seen three centuries? unless some steep,

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\* Præd. rusticum, lib. v.

To human footstep inaccessible,  
Defend a favour'd plant. Now, if some sire  
Leave to his heir a forest-scene : that heir  
With graceless hands hews down each awful trunk,  
Worthy of Druid reverence ; there he rears  
A paltry copse, destined, each twentieth year,  
To blaze inglorious on the hearth. Hence woods,  
Which shelter'd once the stag and grisly boar,  
Scarce to the timorous hare sure refuge lend.  
Farewell each rural virtue with the love  
Of rural scenes. Sage Contemplation wings  
Her flight. No more from burning suns she seeks  
A cool retreat. No more the poet sings,  
Amid re-echoing groves, his moral lay.'—Ed.

As it is thus a general complaint that noble trees are rarely to be found, we must seek them where we can, and consider them, when found, as matters of curiosity, and pay them a due respect.

And yet I should suppose they are not so frequently found in a state of nature as in more cultivated countries. In the forests of America, and other scenes where boundless woods have filled the plains from the beginning of time, and where they grow so close, and cover the ground with so impervious a shade, that even a weed can scarce rise beneath them, the single tree is lost. Unless it stand on the outskirts of the wood, it is

circumscribed, and has not room to expand its vast limbs, as Nature directs. When we wish, therefore, to find the most sublime sylvan character—the Oak, the Elm, or the Ash in perfection, we must not look for it in close, thick woods, but standing single, independent of all connexions, as we sometimes find it in our own forests, though oftener in better protected places, shooting its head wildly into the clouds, and spreading its arms towards every wind of heaven.

‘The Oak

Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm.  
He seems indignant ; and to feel  
The impression of the blast with proud disdain :  
But, deeply-earth'd, the unconscious monarch owes  
His firm stability to what he scorns ;  
More fix'd below, the more disturb'd above.’

There is not, perhaps, in all this country such an Elm as was, in the year 1674, cut down in the park of Sir Walter Bagot, in Staffordshire. The particulars recorded in the family are that two men were five days in felling it ; it measured forty yards to the top in length ; the stool was fifteen yards two feet in circumference ; fourteen loads were broken in the fall ; forty-eight loads were

contained in the top; there were made out of it eighty pair of naves for wheels, and 8660 feet of boards and planks. It cost, at a time when labour was much lower rated than it is now, 10*l.* 17*s.* for sawing. The whole substance was computed to weigh ninety-seven tons.

If I chose to lengthen my catalogue of celebrated trees, I might produce an innumerable host of such as have been mentioned casually by historians and travellers in all ages; as the Plane-tree hanging over the Temple of Delphos, which Theophrastus supposes was as ancient as the times of Agamemnon—that, also, by which Socrates used to swear—the Olive-tree at Linturnum, planted by Scipio Africanus—the Tilia of Basil, under which the German emperors used to dine—the *Malus medica* at the Monastery of Fundi, revered by Thomas Aquinas—the Oak at Bruges, which Francis the First immured—the Lime tree in Sweden, which gave name to the family of the celebrated Linnæus—trees which Captain Cook found in the western parts of California, measuring sixty feet in circumference, and rising to the height of one hundred and fifty feet



without a single knot—solid trees which have been scooped into canoes, capable of holding thirty or forty men; particularly one on record, at Congo, which held two hundred. I might add, also, Arthur's table, in the county hall of Winchester, which has been cut out of a tree of immense girth.\* The Cheltenham Oak also might be introduced, which as near its roots as you can walk, exceeds twenty paces round; the Cawthorpe Oak, likewise, which, at the ground, exceeded twenty-six yards; the Bently Oak in Holt Forest, which at seven feet from the ground, was thirty-four feet in circumference; the Swilcar Oak in Needwood Forest, which, I believe was equal to any of them.† With an innumerable list of this kind I might swell my page; but I reject all such trees as have either been only casually mentioned or have had their value merely ascertained by a timber-

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\* King Arthur's round table is now suspended over the judge's seat in the Nisi Prius Court in St. Stephen's Hall at Winchester.—Ed.

† Many of these trees are mentioned by Mr. Evelyn, and the rest are collected from the topographical remarks of travellers and historians.

merchant's rule. And yet all these have been trees famous in their day; some of them are still alive; and if I were writing a biographical history of trees, I should be glad to insert them, having a reverence for them all. Where one tree attains this noble growth, and makes itself conspicuous, thousands and ten thousands reach only the ordinary size of nature. The few pages, however, at present on my hands, I should wish to allot to such trees only as have somewhat more of history and anecdote annexed to them.

Of the four oaks, last-mentioned in the preceding paragraph, two are still living—the famous Cowthorpe Oak near Wetherby, Yorkshire, and the Swilcher (spelt Swilcar by Gilpin) Oak. In a note to his edition, published in 1834, of this 'Forest Scenery,' Sir T. Dick Lauder stated that, at three feet from the ground, the Cowthorpe Oak measured sixteen yards, and that, close to the ground, it measured twenty-six yards in girth, its principal limb extending forty-eight feet from the trunk. In the year 1718 this tree had its principal branch rent off by a storm—and the branch was found, on being accurately measured, to contain upwards of five tons of timber! Sir T. D. Lauder adds, 'This magnificent vegetable production is still in wonderful preservation, though its foliage be thin.' His statement of the girth of this celebrated tree agrees with

that given by Gilpin. In a statement of the girth—at the ground—published in 1807, the measurement gives seventy-eight feet. But, in the one published in 1842, in Mr. Charles Empson's 'Descriptive Account' of the Cowthorpe Oak, the Author of that work gives his own measurement of the girth, at the ground, in the same year, as being sixty feet only. The apparent discrepancy, however, in the two measurements is accounted for by the fact of the projections near the base of the tree having been covered with earth at some time during the half-century preceding 1842. The Rev. Thomas White, of Cowthorpe Rectory, in a letter to us dated the 27th of May last says:— 'The outline of the dear old tree is very irregular at the base;' and this circumstance, taken in conjunction with the natural decay of an old tree, detracts, of course, from the comparative value of recent admeasurements. Mr. White adds:— 'I have been minister here nearly thirty-five years, and I think the venerable tree has failed very much in that time.' A year or two ago, he informs us, a wood-ranger measured its present main branch and found it contained two and a half tons of wood! The age of this specimen of sylvan magnificence is believed to be nearly 1650 years! The Swilcher Oak at Needwood in Staffordshire, is still a magnificent tree. In 1771 it was nineteen feet round at six feet from the ground. It increased but very slowly from that time to 1825, when it was exactly twenty-one feet four inches and a half in girth at the same distance from the ground. Sir T. D. Lauder, nine years later, said that though still 'a fine, shapely, characteristic tree,

it was nevertheless 'certainly in decay.' He added, that by historical documents, it was known to be six hundred years old! The present vicar of Needwood, the Rev. John E. A. Fenwick, informs us that there is a tradition that the tree was named after one Swilcher, a Danish poet. To give us some indication of its present enormous size, Mr. Fenwick added that he placed his sixteen-hand horse sideways against one side of the tree, and on going himself to the other side he was unable to see either the horse's head or tail.—ED.

One of the most celebrated trees on ancient record was an Oriental Plane, which grew in Phrygia. Its dimensions are not handed down to us; but, from the following circumstances, we may suppose them to have been very ample. When Xerxes set out on his Grecian expedition his route led him near this noble tree. Xerxes, it seems, was a great admirer of trees. Amidst all his devastations in an enemy's country, it was his particular order to spare the groves. This wonderful Plane therefore struck his fancy. He had seen nothing like it before, and, to the astonishment of all his officers, orders were despatched to the right and left of his mighty host to halt three days, during which time he could not be

drawn from the Phrygian Plane. His pavilion was spread under it, and he enjoyed the luxury of its delicious shade, while the Greeks were taking measures to defend Thermopylæ. The story may not speak much in favour of the Prince; but it is my business only to pay honour to the tree.\*

In Arcadia, at the foot of the mountains bounding the Stymphalian plains, (famous for one of the labours of Hercules), stood the little town of Caphiæ; and, just above it, rose a fountain, called the Menalaid fountain; by the side of which, Pausanias tells us,† grew a Plane Tree of extraordinary size and beauty, called the Menalaid Plane. It was generally believed in the country, he tells us, that Menelaus coming to Caphiæ to raise forces for the Trojan war, planted this tree with his own hands. Pausanias travelled through Greece in the reign of Antoninus Pius, who succeeded to the empire, A.D. 151. So that the age of the tree, when Pausanias saw it, must have been about a thousand three hundred years.

I shall next exhibit another Plane Tree of

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\* This account is taken from Elian.

† Paus. Arcad., c. 23.

great celebrity, which flourished in Lycia, during the reigns of the Roman Cæsars. From a vast stem it divided into several huge boughs, every one of which had the consequence of a large tree, and, at a distance, the whole together exhibited the appearance of a grove. Its branches still flourished, while its trunk decayed. This, in process of time, mouldered into an immense cave, at least eighty feet in circumference, around the sides of which were placed seats of pumice stone, cushioned softly with moss. This tree was first brought into repute by Licinius Mutianus, governor of Lycia. Licinius was a curious man, and not unversed in natural history. Pliny, from whom we have the account of the tree, has thought proper to quote him frequently; mentioning particularly his remarks on Egyptian paper,\* and also on that kind of wood of which the statue of Diana at Ephesus was made.† With the Lycian Plane Licinius was exceedingly pleased, and often enjoyed the company of his friends under its shade. It was great luxury, he

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\* Lib. xiii. c. 13.

† Lib. xvi. c. 40.

would say, to dine in its trunk on a sultry summer day; and to hear a heavy shower of rain descending through the several stages of its leaves. As a naturalist, he left it on record that himself and eighteen other persons dined commodiously around the benches in the body of it.

Caligula had a tree of the same kind at his villa near Velitræ. But Caligula's tree appears to have been more complex than the Lycian Plane. It had not only a hollow cave in its trunk, which was capable of holding fifteen persons at dinner, with a proper suit of the emperor's attendants; but, if I understand Pliny rightly,\* it had stories also (probably artificial flooring) in the boughs of the tree. Caligula used to call it, *his nest*.

From the same author we have an account of four Holm Trees,† still existing in his time, which were of great antiquity. Three of them, he says, stood upon the site of the ancient Tibur, which was a city older than Rome; and these trees were not only older than Tibur, but were trees of consequence in the days of Tiburtus, who founded it.

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\* Lib. xii. c. 1.

† Lib. xvi. c. 44.

For tradition assures us, says Pliny, they were the very trees on which that hero observed an ominous flight of birds, and was determined by them in the site of his town. As Tiburtus was the son of Amphiaraus, who died at Thebes a hundred years before the Trojan war, these trees, at the lowest calculation, must have been fourteen or fifteen hundred years old in the time of Pliny. Though this is far from being incredible, yet, as it rests wholly on tradition, we pay it the less attention. What Pliny says in favour of the fourth tree, however, has somewhat more of weight. This tree, he tells us, grew in the Vatican, and had its age inscribed in old Tuscan characters upon its trunk; from which inscription it appeared that, before the city of Rome had its existence, this Holm was a celebrated tree.

When Tiberius built his naumachia, and had occasion for large beams in several parts of his work, he endeavoured to collect them from the various forests of the empire. Among other massy pieces of timber, which were brought to Rome on this occasion, the trunk of a Larch was of so prodigious a size, that the emperor, instead



of using it in his works, ordered it to be laid up as a curiosity. It measured a hundred and twenty feet in length, carrying a diameter of two feet to the very end.\* When this Larch was alive, with all the furniture of its vast top and gigantic limbs in proportion to such a trunk, it must have been an astonishing tree.

The largest tree that ever was known to be brought into Britain formed the mainmast of the 'Royal Sovereign,' in Queen Anne's time. It was ninety feet long, and thirty-five inches in diameter.†

Mr. Evelyn, from whom we have this account, mentions in the same place a still larger tree, which formed the keel of the 'Crown,' a French ship of the last century. It was a hundred and twenty feet long, which is the length of Tiberius's Larch, though it had not probably the circumference of that tree.

The masts of our ships of war, at present, are never made of single trees. It is the method to lay two or three trees together, and, fitting them

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\* Plin. Nat. Hist., l. xvi. c. 40.

† Sylva, p. 228.

close to each other, to bind them tight at proper distances with pitched ropes and collars of iron. But a very noble Fir was lately brought into England, which was not spliced in the common mode, but was converted, in its full dimensions, into the bowsprit of the 'Britannia,' a new ship of one hundred and ten guns, in which capacity, I have heard, it serves at present. This Fir was ninety-six feet in length, and had, I believe, the full diameter of Tiberius's Larch.

Maundrel tells us that when he travelled into the East, a few of the old Cedars of Lebanon were still left. He found them among the snow, near the highest part of the mountain. 'I measured one of the largest of them,' says he, 'and found it twelve yards six inches in girth, and yet sound, and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its boughs. At about five or six yards from the ground it divided into five limbs, each of which was a massy tree.'

A later traveller, Van Egmont, who visited the scenes of Mount Lebanon, seems also to speak of the same trees which Maundrel mentions. He observed them, he says, to be of very different

ages. The old standards had low stems, growing like fruit-trees, whereas the younger made a much more stately appearance, not a little resembling Pines. Of the ancient trees he saw only eleven; those of younger growth far exceeded that number. Some of these old Cedars were four or five fathoms in circumference, Under one of them was erected an altar, where the clergy of Tripoli and the neighbouring convent of Massurki sometimes celebrated mass. From this tree spread five limbs, resembling substantial trees, each being about a hundred feet in length, and inserted into the main trunk about fourteen or fifteen feet from the ground.

These are noble dimensions, though it is probable that the best of the trees now left upon Mount Lebanon are only the refuse of the ancient race, as we may well suppose the best were occasionally taken first. If Solomon's botanical works had still been preserved, it is probable we should have met with trees of much larger dimensions than those which either Maundrel or Van Egmont measured.

Gilpin's reference to the ancient Cedars of Lebanon

suggests an inquiry of very great interest. Are the oldest of the species now standing on Mount Lebanon contemporaries of Solomon's Cedars, with the timber of which, hewn from the mountain by fourscore thousand men, he built the temple of Jerusalem ; or are they not ? Where travellers and historians disagree, who shall decide ? Decision on this point, by which we mean conclusive judgment and not mere dogmatic assertion, is doubtless impossible. The subject is nevertheless, we repeat, one of extreme interest ; and we need offer no apology for alluding to the accounts and opinions of one or two travellers. And first we will refer to Lamartine's account, given in his '*Voyage en Orient*,' of his visit, made on the 13th of April, 1833, to the Cedars of Lebanon. The Arab Scheik of Eden, the last inhabited village of Lebanon, had despatched, on the arrival of Lamartine, three of his men on the road to the Cedars, to ascertain if the snow would allow of the trees being approached. The messengers reported on their return that access to them was impossible, as there were fourteen feet of snow lying in an intervening narrow valley, which afforded the only way of approach. Lamartine, however, was determined to get as near to the Cedars as possible, and accordingly, accompanied by guides, he set out on the journey. The party got to within about 500 or 600 yards of them, but were then compelled to halt, the horses sinking up to their shoulders in snow. 'We descended,' he says (we are quoting from the translation of the '*Voyage en Orient*,' published in 1850 by Messrs. W. and R. Chambers), 'to

the village of Bescherai by a path hewn in the rock, and so deep that it seems inconceivable that men should hazard themselves upon it. Many fatal accidents occur. A stone thrown from the crest we were winding down would fall on the roofs of these villages, which we did not, however, reach in less than an hour's continued descent. Above the cascade and the snow immense fields of ice undulate like vapours of alternate green and blue; and about a mile to the left, in a sort of semicircular vale, formed by the highest cliffs of Lebanon, we perceive a large black spot on the snow; it is the renowned group of cedars. They crown like a diadem the brow of the mountain, and look down upon the out-branchings of the numerous large valleys which fall from it: the sea and the sky are their horizon.' 'These trees,' exclaims Lamartine, 'are the most celebrated natural monuments in the universe. Religion, poetry, and history, have equally consecrated them.' He follows with an eloquent passage, continuing, later on;—'This is the only spot on the chain of Lebanon where they grow, and here they take root far above the region where all considerable vegetation ceases. . . . But alas! Bassan languishes, Carmel and the flowers of Lebanon are fading. These trees are diminished every age. Travellers formerly counted thirty or forty, afterwards seventeen, and at a later date but twelve. There are not more than seven, which, from their massiveness, can be pronounced contemporaries of the biblical era. Around these aged witnesses of times past—who know the history of the earth better than history herself, who

would tell us, if they could speak, of so many empires, religions and human races swept away—there still remains a small forest of younger Cedars, which appear to me to form a group of 400 or 500 trees or bushes.' Mr. Kinglake in his 'Eothen' appears to discredit the belief that the existing trees have survived from the days of Solomon. He says;—'The group of Cedars remaining on this part of the Lebanon is held sacred by the Greek Church, on account of a prevailing notion that the trees were standing at the time when the Temple of Jerusalem was built. They occupy three or four acres on the mountain's side, and many of them are gnarled in a way that implies great age; but, except these signs, I saw nothing in their appearance or conduct that tended to prove them contemporaries of the Cedars employed in Solomon's Temple.' In his work 'The Crescent and the Cross,' Eliot Warburton gives a description of his visit to the historic Cedars. He maintains that there were, when he visited the Lebanon forest, twelve of the old trees remaining. His words are,—'There are twelve old trees, or Saints as they are called, being supposed to be coeval with those that furnished timber for Solomon's Temple—yes, twelve, I will maintain it, notwithstanding all the different computations on the subject, are there standing now. It is natural that there should be diversity of opinion, perhaps, as the forest consists of about one thousand trees, among which there is a succession of all ages; nevertheless, there is the apostolic number, first-rate in size and venerable appearance. The largest of these is

forty-five feet in circumference ; the second is forty-four. Many of them are scarred with travellers' names.' If the most ancient of the Cedars now growing on Mount Lebanon are contemporaries of King Solomon's trees, they would be more than 3000 years old ! The Cedar is known to grow to a great age, and tree life has been known to extend much beyond 3000 years, so that the hypothesis is not an unreasonable one, that the existing Cedars of Lebanon were growing when the Temple at Jerusalem was being built.—Ed.

One of the noblest trees on record is the Chestnut upon Mount Etna, called the *Castagna de cento cavalli*. It is still alive, but has lost much of its original dignity. Many travellers take notice of it. Brydone was one of the last who saw it. His account is dated about sixteen or seventeen years ago.\* It had then the appearance of five distinct trees. The space within them, he was assured, had once been filled with solid timber, when the whole formed only one tree. The possibility of this he could not at first conceive, for the five trees together contained a space of two hundred and four feet in circumference. At length, how-

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\* Gilpin wrote this, it must be remembered, in 1791.—Ed.

ever, he was convinced, not only by the testimony of the country, and the accurate examination of the Canon Recupero, a learned naturalist in those parts, but by the appearance of the trees themselves, none of which had any bark on the inside. This Chestnut is of such renown, that Brydone tells us he had seen it marked in an old map of Sicily, published a hundred years ago.\*

Among other authors who mention this tree, Kircher gives us the following account of its condition in his day, which might be about a century before Brydone saw it:—‘Ostendit mihi viæ dux, unius castaniæ corticem, tantæ magnitudinis, ut intra eam integer pecorum grex, a pastoribus tanquam in caula commodissima, noctu intercluderetur.’† From this account, one should imagine that in Kircher’s days the five trees were *more united* than when Brydone saw them.

In his interesting work on Mount Etna, published last

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\* See Brydone’s Trav., vol. i. p. 117.

† My guide showed me here, what I can call only the shell, or bark of a Chestnut tree, but of such amazing circumference, that one of the shepherds of the country used it as a fold for a large flock of sheep.



year, Mr. G. F. Rodwell writes concerning the gigantic and famous Chestnut, as follows ; 'The celebrated *Castagno di Cento Cavalli*, one of the largest and oldest trees in the world, is in the forest of Carpinetto, on the east side of the mountain, five miles from Giarre. This tree has the appearance of five separate trunks united into one, but Ferrara declares that, by digging a very short distance below the surface, he found one single stem. The public road now passes through the much-decayed trunk. Captain Symth measured the circumference a few feet from the ground, and found it to be 163 feet, which would give it a diameter of more than fifty feet. The tree derives its name from the story that one of the Queens of Aragon took shelter in its trunk with a suite of 100 horsemen, Mr. Rodwell adds :—'Near this patriarch are several large Chestnuts, which, without a shadow of doubt, are single trees ; one of these is eighteen feet in diameter, and a second fifteen feet, while the *Castagno della Galea*, higher up on the mountains, is twenty-five feet in diameter, and probably more than 1000 years old.'—Ed.

At Niestadt, in the Duchy of Wirtemberg, stood a Lime which was for many ages so remarkable that the city frequently took its denomination from it, being often called *Niestadt an der grossen Linden*, or Niestadt near the Great Lime. Scarce any person passed near Niestadt without visiting this tree, and many princes and

great men did honour to it by building obelisks, columns, and monuments of various kinds around it, engraved with their arms and names, to which the dates were added, and often some device. Mr. Evelyn,\* who procured copies of several of these monumental inscriptions, tells us there were near two hundred of them. The columns on which they were fixed served also to bear up the vast limbs of the tree, which began, through age, to become unwieldy. Thus this mighty plant stood many years in great state, the ornament of the town, the admiration of the country, and supported, as it were, by the princes of the empire. At length it felt the effects of war. Niestadt was surrounded by an enemy, and the limbs of this venerable tree were mangled in wantonness by the besieging troops. Whether it still exist, I know not; but long after these injuries it stood a noble ruin, discovering by the foundations of the several monuments which formerly propped its spreading boughs, how far its limits had once extended.

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\* See *Ev. Sylva*, p. 225.

A Plane of the same enormous growth is mentioned by a late traveller \* at the city of Cos. It stands in the centre of the market-place, and overspreads the whole area of it. But its vast limbs, bending with their own weight, require support; and the inhabitants of Cos have supported them in a still grander style than the Lime at Niestadt is supported. The whole city is overspread with the ruins of antiquity, and some of the choicest columns of marble and granite, which had formerly adorned temples and porticoes, have been collected and brought to prop the limbs of this vast tree. Though the picturesque eye is not fond of these adventitious supports, and would rather see the boughs bending to the ground under their own weight, yet, if they are proper anywhere, they are proper in such a situation as this, where the tree fills the whole area of a market-place with its extended boughs, and is connected with the houses on every side by the pillars which support them. Some such idea as this very probably gave birth to that beautiful form in Gothic architecture of a

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\* Voyage Pittoresque de la Grèce.

circular room whose dome is supported by a single column rising from the centre and ramifying over the roof. We have two or three such appendages of cathedrals in England, under the name of chapter-houses. The most beautiful I know is at Salisbury, which I scruple not to call one of the most pleasing ideas in architecture. The Plane at Cos is greatly revered by all the inhabitants of the city. Much of their public business is transacted in the market-place. There, too, they hold their little social meetings, and we may easily conceive the luxury, in such a climate, of a grand leafy canopy to screen them from the fervour of the sun. To add to the beauty and convenience of this very delicious scene, a fountain of limpid water bubbles up near the roots of the tree.

As a parallel to these trees, I shall next celebrate the Lime of Cleves. This, also, was a tree of great magnificence. It grew in an open plain, just at the entrance of the city, and was thought an object worthy to exercise the taste of magistracy. The burgomaster of his day had it surveyed with great accuracy, and trimmed into eight broad, pyramidal faces. Each corner

was supported by a handsome stone pillar, and in the middle of the tree, among the branches, was cut a noble room, which the vast space contained within easily suffered, without injuring the regularity of any of the eight faces. To crown all, the top was curiously clipped into some kind of head, and adorned artificially; but in what manner, whether with the head of a lion, or a stag, a weather-cock, or a sun-dial, we are not told. It was something, however, in the highest style of Dutch taste. This tree was long the admiration and envy of all the states of Holland, and Mr. Evelyn, from whom we have the relation, seems to have thought it a piece of excellent workmanship. 'I needed not,' says he, 'have charged this paragraph with half these trees, but to show how much more the Lime Tree seems disposed to be wrought into these arboreous wonders than other trees of slower growth.' \*

In the wars between Henry II., King of England, and Philip of France, the two kings had a conference in the year 1188, near Gisors, under an Elm

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\* Sylva, p. 225.

which, we are told, covered several acres of land.\* The truth, I suppose, is, that it was an immense tree. Under its canopy so numerous a train of the prelates and nobility of both nations, who attended the two kings, were assembled, that perhaps no tree ever before sheltered so magnificent a company. Some time afterwards, hostilities again commencing between these princes, Philip ordered the Elm to be cut down. As it appeared to be in no shape an object to him, people were apt to say he did it in a fit of spiteful revenge against Henry, who often, when his army lay encamped in those parts, took a pleasure in sitting under its shade.

The Oaks of Chaucer are celebrated, in the annals of poetry, as the trees under which—

‘The laughing sage  
Caroll’d his moral song.’

They grew in the park at Donnington Castle, near Newbury, where Chaucer spent his latter life in studious retirement. The largest of these trees was called the *King's Oak*, and carried an erect

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\* See Smollett's Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 210.

stem of fifty feet before it broke into branches, and was cut into a beam five feet square. The next in size was called the *Queen's Oak*, and survived the calamities of the civil wars in King Charles's time, though Donnington Castle and the country around it were so often the scene of action and desolation. Its branches were very curious; they pushed out from the stem in several uncommon directions, imitating the horns of a ram rather than the branches of an Oak. When it was felled, it yielded a beam forty feet long, without knot or blemish, perfectly straight, four feet square at the butt end, and near a yard at the top. The third of these Oaks was called *Chaucer's*, of which we have no particulars; in general, only, we are told that it was a noble tree, though inferior to either of the others.\* None of them, I should suppose from this account, was a tree of picturesque beauty. A straight stem, of forty or fifty feet, let its head be what it will, can hardly produce a picturesque form. When we admired the Stone Pine, we supposed its stem to

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\* See Evelyn's *Sylva*, p. 227.

take a sweeping line, and to be broken, also, with stumps or decayed branches.

Close by the gate of the water-walk, at Magdalen College in Oxford, grew an Oak, which perhaps stood there a sapling, when Alfred the Great founded the university. This period only includes a space of nine hundred years, which is no great age for an Oak. It is a difficult matter, indeed, to ascertain the age of a tree.\* The age of a castle or abbey is the object of history. Even a common house is recorded by the family that built it. All these objects arrive at maturity in their youth, if I may so speak. But the tree, gradually completing its growth, is not worth recording in the early part of its existence. It is then only a common tree, and, afterwards, when it becomes remarkable for its age, the memory of its youth is forgotten. This tree, however, can almost produce historical evidence for the age it boasts.

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\* In most exogenous trees, or those which increase by additions of tissue outwards from the central column or pith, a very near approximation to their age may be obtained by counting the concentric 'rings' shown on the trunk, though only, of course, when the latter is cut across—each 'ring' representing the tissue added during one year's growth.—Ed.



About five hundred years after the time of Alfred, William of Wainfleet, Dr. Stukely tells us, expressly ordered his college to be founded near the *great Oak*,\* and an Oak could not well be less than five hundred years of age to merit that title, together with the honour of fixing the site of a college. When the magnificence of Cardinal Wolsey erected that handsome tower, which is so ornamental to the whole building, this tree might probably be in the meridian of its glory, or rather, perhaps, it had attained a green old age. But it must have been manifestly in its decline at that memorable era, when the tyranny of James gave the fellows of Magdalen so noble an opportunity of withstanding bigotry and superstition. It was much injured in Charles II.'s time, when the present walks were laid out. Its roots were disturbed, and, from that period, it declined fast, and became reduced by degrees to little more than a mere trunk. The oldest members of the university can scarce recollect it in better plight. But the faithful records of history † have handed

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\* Itiner. Curios.

† See Dr. Plot's Hist. of Oxf. ch. vi. sect. 45.

down its ancient dimensions. Through a space of sixteen yards, on every side from its trunk, it once flung its boughs, and under its magnificent pavilion could have sheltered, with ease, three thousand men, though in its decayed state it could, for many years, do little more than shelter some luckless individual whom the driving shower had overtaken in his evening walk. In the summer of the year 1788, this magnificent ruin fell to the ground, alarming the college with its rushing sound. It then appeared how precariously it had stood for many years. Its grand tap-root was decayed, and it had hold of the earth only by two or three roots, of which none was more than a couple of inches in diameter. From a part of its ruins a chair has been made for the president of the college, which will long continue its memory.

The chair referred to by our Author as having been made out of the ruins of the famous Magdalen College Oak stands, we are informed by the Rev. Frederic Bulley, the president of the College, 'in the Hall of the President's lodgings, where it may be seen by visitors.' Dr. Bulley adds, 'It is in the gothic style of architecture, and a fine specimen of the carving of ninety years ago.' Subjoined

is a copy, courteously furnished to us by Dr. Bulley, of the inscription on a brass plate attached to the seat.

Quercus Magdalenensis Corruit  
 Festo S. Petri A.D. MDCCLXXXIX.  
 Cujus E Ligno,  
 Ne Arboris  
 Usque A Collegio Fundato  
 Notissimæ  
 Prorsus abolecat Memoria,  
 Hanc Sellam  
 Præsidents Sociique  
 Fabricandam Curaverunt  
 A.D. MDCCXCI.  
 Juxta Exemplar  
 A. Ricardo Paget A.M. Semicom.  
 Delineatum,  
 Cælavit  
 Robertus Archer Oxoniensis.—ED.

Near Worksop grew an Oak, which, in respect both to its own dignity and the dignity of its situation, deserves honourable mention. In point of grandeur few trees equalled it. It overspread a space of ninety feet from the extremities of its opposite boughs. These dimensions will produce an area capable, on mathematical calculation, of covering a squadron of two hundred and thirty-

five horse. The dignity of its station was equal to the dignity of the tree itself. It stood on a point where Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire unite, and spread its shade over a portion of each. From the honourable station of thus fixing the boundaries of three large counties, it was equally respected through the domains of them all, and was known far and wide by the honourable distinction of the *Shire Oak*, by which appellation it was marked among cities, towns, and rivers, in all the larger maps of England.\*

In the garden at Tortworth, in Gloucestershire, an old family-seat belonging to Lord Ducie, grows a Spanish Chestnut of great age and dimensions. Traditional accounts suppose it to have been a boundary-tree in the time of King John; and I have met with other accounts which place it in the same honourable station in the reign of King Stephen. How much older it may be we know not. Considerably older it probably was, for we rarely make boundary-trees of saplings and off-sets, which are liable to a thousand accidents, and are

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\* See Evelyn's *Sylva*, p. 232.

unable to maintain, with proper dignity, the station delegated to them. This tree is at present in hands which justly value and protect its age. It was barely included within the garden wall, which bore hard upon it. Lord Ducie has lately removed the incumbrance, and at the same time applied fresh earth to the roots of the tree, which seems to have enlivened it. So late as in the year 1788 it produced great quantities of chestnuts, which, though small, were sweet and well-flavoured. In the great Chestnut cause, mentioned a little above,\* between Barrington and Ducarel, this venerable tree was called upon as an evidence, and gave a very respectable testimony in favour of the Chestnuts.

Nothing is more remarkable in connexion with this account of 'celebrated trees' than the fact that the renowned Tortworth Chestnut is still alive. The Rev. C. Greswell, of Tortworth, has expressed the opinion, in an interesting communication with which he has favoured us, that during his residence of thirty-eight years in the neighbourhood the old tree has not much changed. He says, 'The trunk of the original tree is, of course, hollow and much decayed, but it has surrounded itself with a

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\* See page 86.

numerous progeny of strong and healthy suckers which give it, still, a very imposing appearance, especially in summer, when it is in full leaf. Like the Phoenix of antiquity, it may be said to have risen again out of its own ashes.' It is believed to be more than a thousand years old! and is, in all probability, the oldest tree of its kind in England. In an account of it, published in 1825, in a work entitled 'Sylvan Sketches' by the author of *The Flora Domestica*, it is stated that even in the year 1150 it was called the great or the old Chestnut of Tortworth, a statement which would agree with Gilpin's information that it was 'a boundary-tree in the time of King John,' or even in the earlier reign of Stephen. In 1720 it measured fifty-one feet in girth at six feet from the ground. In 1779 it had measured fifty-four feet in girth. Very old trees, however, naturally diminish in girth after a certain period by the decay and falling off of portions of the lower part of the trunk. This has happened, though not in a noticeable degree, in the case of the Tortworth Chestnut. Mr Greswell kindly obtained for us from Lord Ducie's gardener about the end of last May, an exact measurement of the Tortworth Chestnut at the present time. The result is as follows:—Girth, at three feet from the ground, forty-nine feet: at six feet from the ground, fifty feet: north and south, eighty-six feet through: east and west, eighty-eight feet through. 'These latter statements,' Mr. Greswell explains, 'give an idea of the extent of space covered by the branches which have shot out from the trunk.'—Ed.

After mentioning this Chestnut, which has been celebrated so much, I cannot forbear mentioning another, which is equally remarkable for having never been celebrated at all, though it is one of the largest trees that perhaps ever existed in England. If it had ever been noticed merely for its bulk, I should have passed it over among other gigantic plants that had nothing else to boast, but as no historian or antiquarian, so far as I have heard, has taken the least notice of it, I thought it right, from this very circumstance, to make up the omission by giving it, at least, what little credit these papers could give. This Chestnut grows at a place called Wimley, near Hitchin Priory in Hertfordshire. In the year 1789, at five feet above the ground, its girth was somewhat more than fourteen yards. Its trunk was hollow, and in part open. But its vegetation was still vigorous. On one side its vast arms, shooting up in various forms, some upright and others oblique, were decayed and peeled at the extremities, but issued from luxuriant foliage at their insertion in the trunk. On the other side the foliage was still full, and hid all decay.

But for the marvellous longevity of the Chestnut tree it would be scarcely conceivable, from Gilpin's description, that the one growing near Hitchin, first made famous by his mention, ninety years ago, could still be living. Yet such is the fact, the place where it stands being Little Wymondley (Gilpin's spelling of the name, Wimley, being doubtless suggested by the pronunciation). The tree is situated near Little Wymondley Church, and is visible from the Railway, the nearest station being Stevenage, from which it is distant a little more than a mile. The Rev. Lewis Hensley, the vicar of Hitchin, courteously sent to us a photograph of the tree, taken in 1875, since which, he thinks, there has been little change in the appearance of this singular and most remarkable sylvan ruin. Mr. Hensley mentioned in his letter (dated the 19th of May, 1879) that not long ago it put out some fresh shoots. The vicar of Little Wymondley (the Rev. Willoughby J. E. Rooke) is of opinion that the ancient tree has not altered 'in any respect for the last four or five years.' By its side is what looks like a pile of timber. This, Mr. Rooke informs us, 'is a portion of the trunk which (being hollow) was unable to support the weight of the upper branches, and so gave way, and fell, in a mass, on one side of the tree; but, being itself so very massive, broke into many longitudinal pieces from the concussion, on reaching the ground, where it has lain ever since untouched, fortunately, by any one.' Mr. Rooke adds;— 'It is not now easy to take the girth, as more than half the trunk is gone, but the line remains at the base where



one could trace the circumference.' 'Some six or seven years ago,' our correspondent continues, 'I measured the circumference, and made it to be about fifteen yards—fourteen yards would be within the mark.' Last year, we learn from Mr. Rooke, this marvellous tree bore—on what were once the suckers, but are now large limbs or trees—an abundance of fruit.—Ed.

In a glade of Hainhault Forest in Essex, about a mile from Barkingside, stands an Oak, which has been known through many centuries, by the name of Fairlop. The tradition of the country traces it half way up the Christian era. It is still a noble tree, though it has now suffered greatly from the depredations of time. About a yard from the ground, where its rough fluted stem is thirty-six feet in circumference, it divides into eleven vast arms, yet not in the horizontal manner of an Oak, but rather in that of a Beech. Beneath its shade, which overspreads an area of three hundred feet in circuit, an annual fair has long been held on the 2nd of July, and no booth is suffered to be erected beyond the extent of its boughs. But as their extremities are now become sapless, and age is yearly curtailing their

length, the liberties of the fair seem to be in a desponding condition. The honour however is great. But honours are often accompanied with inconveniences, and Fairlop has suffered from its honourable distinctions. In the feasting that attends a fair, fires are often necessary, and no places seemed so proper to make them in as the hollow cavities formed by the heaving roots of the tree. This practice has brought a speedier decay on Fairlop than it might otherwise have suffered.

Gilpin remarked in a note at the end of the first volume of the edition of the 'Forest Scenery' published in 1791,—'I am doubtful whether the *fair* here mentioned has not been for some time discontinued.' This note does not appear in the two following editions. Fairlop Fair is still regularly held at the same time of the year, but no longer around the Fairlop Oak, which was blown down during high winds that prevailed in the year 1820.—Ed.

Not far from Blandford, in Dorsetshire, stood very lately a tree known by the name of Damory's Oak. About five or six centuries ago, it was probably in a state of maturity. At the ground its

circumference was sixty-eight feet, and seventeen feet above the ground its diameter was four yards. As this vast trunk decayed it became hollow, forming a cavity which was fifteen feet wide and seventeen feet high, capable of holding twenty men. During the civil wars, and till after the restoration, this cave was regularly inhabited by an old man, who sold ale in it. In the violent storm in the year 1703 it suffered greatly, many of its noblest limbs having been torn from it. But it was still so grand a ruin, above forty years after, that some of its branches were seventy-five feet high, and extended seventy-two. In the year 1755, when it was fit for nothing but firewood, it was sold for fourteen pounds.\*

In Torwood, in the county of Sterling, upon a little knoll, stand at this time the ruins of an Oak, which is supposed to be the largest tree that ever grew in Scotland. The trunk of it is now wholly decayed and hollow; but it is evident, from what remains, that its diameter could not

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\* See Hutchins's Acc. of Dorsetshire, vol. i., with a print of it.

have been less than eleven or twelve feet. What its age may be, is matter only of conjecture; but, from some circumstances, it is probably a tree of great antiquity. The little knoll it stands on is surrounded by a swamp, over which a causeway leads to the tree, or rather to a circle which seems to have run round it. The vestiges of this circle, as well as the causeway, bear a plain resemblance to those works which are commonly attributed to the Druids. So that it is probable this tree was a scene of worship belonging to those heathen priests. But the credit of it does not depend on the dubious vestiges of Druid antiquity. In a later scene of greater importance (if tradition ever be the vehicle of truth), it bore a great share. When that illustrious hero, William Wallace, roused the spirit of the Scotch nation to oppose the tyranny of Edward, he often chose the solitude of Torwood as a place of rendezvous for his army. Here he concealed his numbers and his designs, sallying out suddenly on the enemy's garrisons, and retreating, as suddenly, when he feared to be overpowered. While his army lay in those woods, the Oak, which we are now com-

memorating, was commonly his headquarters. Here the hero generally slept, its hollow trunk being capacious enough to afford shelter, not only to himself, but to several of his officers. This tree has ever since been known by the name of *Wallace Tree*, by which name it may easily be found in Torwood to this day.\*

The 'Wallace Oak,' in Torwood Forest, must have disappeared very early in the present century ; but at what particular date it is extremely difficult to say, for the reason that its remains were taken away, bit by bit, by that numerous and insatiable class, the relic hunters. In Sir Walter Scott's 'Tales of a Grandfather,' written about the year 1827, occurs a reference to the tree. Scott says : (Chapter VII. 'The Story of Sir William Wallace.') 'A large Oak tree in the adjoining forest (Torwood) was long shown as marking the spot where Wallace slept before the battle' (of Falkirk), 'or, as others said, in which he hid himself after the defeat. Nearly forty years ago Grandpapa saw some of its roots ;' (evidently the 'ruins' referred to by Gilpin as existing about the same time) 'but the body of the tree was, even then, entirely decayed, and there is not now, and has not been for many years, the least vestige of it to be seen.'—Ed.

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\* See Nimmo's Hist. of Stirlingshire, p. 145.

Among these celebrated trees we must not forget Hern's Oak in Windsor Forest. Shakespeare tells us,—

‘ An old tale goes, that Hern the hunter,  
Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,  
Doth all the winter time, at still of midnight,  
Walk round about this Oak, with ragged horns ;  
And then he blasts the trees, destroys the cattle,  
Makes the milch-cow yield blood, and shakes a chain  
In hideous, dreadful manner.’

This tree, as far as we can pay credit to tradition and general opinion, still exists. In the little park at Windsor is a walk, known by the name of Queen Elizabeth's Walk. It consists of Elms, among which is a single Oak taken into the row, as if particularly meant to be distinguished, at the time when the walk was laid out. This tree is supposed to be Hern's Oak. It is a large tree, measuring about twenty-four feet in circumference, and is still in great vigour, which I think chiefly injures its historical credit. For though it is evidently a tree in years, and might well have existed in the time of Elizabeth, it seems too strong and vigorous to have been a proper tree in that age, for Hern, the hunter, to have danced

round. Fairies, elves, and that generation of people, universally chose the most ancient and venerable trees they could find to gambol under; and the poet who should describe them dancing under a sapling, would show little acquaintance with his subject. That this tree could not be called a venerable tree two hundred years ago, is evident, because it hardly can assume that character even now; and yet an Oak, in a soil it likes, will continue so many years in a vigorous state, that we must not lay more stress on this argument than it will fairly bear. It may be added, however, in its favour, that a pit or ditch is still shown near the tree, as Shakespeare describes it, which may have been preserved with the same veneration as the tree itself.

Opinions have differed as to which of two old Oaks in Windsor Park was the veritable 'Herne's;' but the weight of authority appears to have inclined in favour of a tree which was cut down in 1796, several years after Gilpin wrote his 'Forest Scenery.'—Ed.

There is an Oak in the grounds of Sir Gerard Van Neck, at Heveningham, in Suffolk, which carries us likewise into the times of Elizabeth.

But this tree brings its evidence with it—evidence which, if necessary, might carry it into Saxon times. It is now falling fast into the decline of years, and every year robs it more of its honours. But its trunk, which measures thirty-five feet in circumference, still retains its grandeur, though the ornaments of its boughs and foliage are much reduced. But the grandeur of the trunk consists only in appearance. It is a mere shell. In Queen Elizabeth's time it was hollow, and from this circumstance the tree derives the honour of being handed down to posterity. That princess, who from her earliest age loved masculine amusements, used often, it is said, in her youth, to take her stand in this tree, and shoot the deer as they passed. From that time it has been known by the name of Queen Elizabeth's Oak.

Though falling fast into the decline of years in the last century, Queen Elizabeth's Oak is still standing upon Lord Huntingfield's property at Heveningham; and the Rev. William Belcher, rector of the parish, informs us that it is 'a magnificent old tree of enormous girth.' The fact of the marvellous prolongation of Oak life finds a singular illustration in the continued existence of a tree, which, if the report of it given by Gilpin be correct, was so hollow in



Queen Elizabeth's day as to furnish space enough for the Maiden Queen to ensconce herself within its shell.—Ed.

After celebrating the grandeur of these sons of the forest, I should wish to introduce, in due subordination, two or three celebrated fruit trees.

In the Deanery Garden at Winchester stood lately (so lately as the year 1757) an ancient Fig Tree. Through a succession of many deans it had been cased up, and shielded from winds and frost. The wall to which it was nailed, was adorned with various inscriptions in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, alluding to such passages of the sacred writings as do honour to the Fig Tree. After having been presented with several texts of Scripture, the reader was informed, by way of climax, that *in the year 1623, King James I. tasted of the fruit of this Fig Tree with great pleasure.*

At Lambeth, likewise, are two celebrated Fig Trees, which, on good grounds, are supposed to have been planted by Cardinal Pole. They are immense trees of the kind, covering a space of wall fifty feet in height, and forty in breadth. The circumference of the stem of one of them is twenty-eight inches, and of the other twenty-one.

They are of the white Marseilles kind, and have for many years furnished the tables of the Archbishops of Canterbury with very delicious fruit.

The two Fig Trees at Lambeth, referred to by Gilpin, grew in the garden of the Archbishop's palace ; but they were removed during some extensive alterations which took place in the grounds about half a century ago, not, however, before cuttings from them were taken. Five of these cuttings, planted against the library wall of the palace, have now become five trees, which are greater in girth than the stocks from which they came. We paid a visit to them on the courteous invitation of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, and, on that occasion, learnt that they continue to furnish the tables of the Archbishops, as did the trees planted by Cardinal Pole, with an abundance of 'very delicious fruit.'—Ed.

Among other remarkable fruit trees may be reckoned a Vine belonging to the late Sir Charles Raymond, at Valentine House, near Ilford, in Essex. It was planted, a cutting, in the year 1758, of the black Hamburg sort ; and as the fruit of this species will not easily ripen in the open air, it was planted in a hot-house, though without any preparation of soil, which is, in those grounds, a stiff loam or rather clay. The hot-house is a very

large one, about seventy feet in front; and the Vine, which I understand is pruned in a peculiar manner, extends two hundred feet, part of it running along the south wall on the outside of the hot-house. In the common mode of pruning, this species of Vine is no great bearer; but managed as it is here, it produces wonderfully. Sir Charles Raymond, on the death of his lady in 1778, left Valentine House, at which time the gardener had the profits of the Vine. It annually produced about four hundredweight of grapes, which used formerly (when the hot-house, I suppose, was kept warmer) to ripen in March; though lately they have not ripened till June, when they sell at four shillings a pound, which produces about eighty pounds sterling. This account I had from Mr. Eden, the gardener who planted the Vine. With regard to the profits of it, I think it probable, from the accounts I have had from other hands, that when the grapes ripened earlier, they produced much more than eighty pounds. A gentleman of character informed me that he had it from Sir Charles Raymond himself, that, after supplying his own table, he has made a hundred and twenty

pounds a year of the grapes; and the same gentleman, who was curious, inquired of the fruit dealers, who told him that, in some years, they supposed the profits might have amounted to three hundred pounds. This does not contradict Mr. Eden's account, who said that the utmost he ever made of it (that is, I suppose, when the grapes sold at four shillings a pound in June) was eighty-four pounds. At the lowest calculation, the profits were prodigious. The stem of this Vine was, in the year 1789, thirteen inches in circumference.

We learn from Mr William Earley—a considerable authority on all matters horticultural—that the remarkable vine referred to in the preceding paragraph is still living. Its prolific stem, which, ninety years ago, was 'thirteen inches in circumference,' is now dead; but it has given place to two 'canes,' which, annually, up to and including the past season, bore excellent crops of remarkably well-flavoured fruit. Mr. Earley adds to his very interesting communication,—'So popular did this large vine' (the one mentioned by Gilpin) 'become, that cuttings of it were taken far and wide;' and he states, further, that an enormous grape vine known as the 'Hampton Court' vine, 'a prodigy of its kind,' has been grown from a cutting from the old vine at Valentine House.—Ed.

But the Vine, even as a timber tree, has its place in history. Mr. Misson, a traveller, of whom Mr. Addison speaks with particular respect, tells us \* that the gates of the great church at Ravenna in Italy were made of Vine planks, twelve feet long, and fourteen or fifteen inches broad. The Vine from which these planks were taken must have been an enormous vegetable of its kind. Indeed, if the account had not been well attested, it would have exceeded credit. Misson adds that the soil about Ravenna, on the side next the sea, was remarkable for the enormous growth of Vines, and, he supposes, it was owing to the rich manure left by the sea. For though the town of Ravenna in his day stood a league from the Adriatic, yet it is an undoubted fact that the sea formerly washed its walls, and that the present Ravenna occupies the site of the ancient Ravenna, which, we know, was one of the best ports the Romans had on the Adriatic.

Having thus given the history of some of the most celebrated trees on record, I cannot help

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\* See Misson's Travels in Italy.

subjoining an account of a few particular species, which are remarkably singular.

In the memoirs of the French academy we find a description of a very curious tree, by Mr. Adanson, called the Boabab. It is a native of Senegal, and has been taken notice of by Prosper Alpinus, and other botanists ; but Mr. Adanson, who spent several years in those parts, seems to have had the best opportunities of being acquainted with it. As to its botanical peculiarities, which are great, and its physical uses, which are many, we enter not into them. We have only to do with its external form, which is very uncommon. It is supposed to be the largest of Nature's vegetable productions—the behemoth of the forest. From Mr. Adanson's account one should suppose the Boabab to be a kind of natural pollard. He tells us its trunk seldom rises higher than twelve feet, though its diameter exceeds seventy. From this amazing trunk spring a number of massy branches. The centre branch rises perpendicularly sixty or seventy feet ; the lateral branches shoot in angles less and less acute, till the lowest series form right angles

with the trunk, and so become horizontal. In this direction they stretch fifty or sixty feet, till their weight brings them to the ground, with which the extremities of many of them are in contact. So that the whole tree has the appearance of a woody hemisphere, whose radius, including the thickness of the trunk, must be about eighty or ninety feet. Whatever may be said for the peculiarity of such a tree, we cannot say much in favour of its picturesque form. It seems to be little more than a monstrous bush. The bark of this tree is of an ash-coloured tint. Its leaves are oval, pointed at the end, and about five inches long. Though the Boabab is a native of Africa, yet a small one was found growing in the island of Martinico. It is supposed, however, to have been brought thither by some negro slave, as it is common among those poor people to carry about them seeds of different kinds, as charms and remedies, and it is certain that many African plants have been propagated in the West Indies in this accidental manner.

We have lately had an account of another African tree, which is equally wonderful. In some

private despatches to the Chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, one, relating to the natural history of the country, states that, in the woods contiguous to the settlement, is a Silk-cotton Tree, which, at five feet from the ground, measures sixty-eight feet in circumference, and, at fifty feet from the ground, thirty-one. The height of this tree is prodigious; but the adjoining trees, crowding round, prevent its being accurately taken. This account mentions the trees of this species as the largest in the country.

Mr. Evelyn gives us the description of another curious tree, called the Arbor de Rays, which is found chiefly in the East Indies, and is remarkable for the manner in which it propagates. From the end of its boughs it distils, in a continued viscous thread, a kind of gummy matter, which increases like an icicle till it reach the ground, where it takes root and becomes a stem, putting forth new branches, and propagating anew, so that a single plant of this kind may increase into a forest.

Strabo describes an Indian tree, which I should suppose was the same with Mr. Evelyn's Arbor de Rays; only Strabo accounts more simply for



the mode of its propagation. Its branches, he says, grow horizontally about twelve cubits, and then take a direction to the earth, where they root themselves, and, when they have attained maturity, continue to propagate in the same manner, till the ground is covered with them for a considerable space, or, as Strabo more expressively describes it, till the whole becomes *like a tent supported by many columns*.<sup>\*</sup> This seems to be the tree of which Milton speaks.

‘Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root; and daughters grow  
About the mother tree; a pillared shade,  
High over-arched, with echoing walks between.  
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,  
Shelters in cool; and tends his pasturing herds  
At loopholes cut through thickest shade.’

Modern travellers speak of an Indian tree like this (the only tree of the kind they know), which they call the Banian tree, or Indian Fig. In its mode of propagation it corresponds rather with Strabo’s description than Evelyn’s. We are informed however that, although common in India,

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\* Πολυστυλω σκηνη ὁμοιον, p. 694, edit. Caus.

it is not very commonly found in that state of grandeur in which it is here described. Nor, indeed, will it easily take that very regular form without some little assistance from art. Instead of the *Indian herdsman*, whom Milton introduces, it is often, at this day, inhabited by a Bramin, who builds his little reed-thatched shed against its trunk, and amuses his leisure by directing its lengthening branches into proper places, and forming each into a regular arch. Here, dressed in a long white tunic, the habit of his order, and adorned with a flowing beard, he spends his solitary hours in wandering among the verdant alleys of his tree, scarce ever leaving its limits. The inhabitants of the district resort daily to him with the necessaries of life, and receive, in return, his prayers and benedictions.

There is a tree in the island of Java called the Upas, or Poison Tree, which (in the history of curious trees) should not be omitted, though the accounts of it are so wonderful, that some have esteemed them fabulous. They are given to the public by a surgeon belonging to the Dutch East India Company, of the name of Foersch, who was

stationed at Batavia in the year 1774. Surprising, however, as these accounts may be, they are accompanied with so many public facts and names of persons and places, that it is somewhat difficult to conceive them fabulous. The abridged narrative of this strange production is this.

The Upas grows about twenty-seven leagues from Batavia, in a plain surrounded by rocky mountains; the whole of which plain, containing a circle of ten or twelve miles round the tree, is totally barren. Nothing that breathes or vegetates can live within its influence. The bird, that flies over it, drops down dead. The beast, that wanders into it, expires. The whole dreadful area is covered with sand, over which lie scattered loose flints and whitening bones. This tree may be called the emperor's great military magazine. In a solution of the poisonous gum which exudes from it, his arrows and offensive weapons are dipped. The procuring, therefore, of this poisonous gum, is a matter of as much attention as of difficulty. Criminals only are employed in this dreadful service. Of these, several, every year, are sent with a promise of pardon and reward, if

they procure it. Hooded in leathern cases, with glass eyelet-holes, and secured as much as possible from the full effluvia of the air they are to breathe, they undertake this melancholy journey, travelling always with the wind. About one in ten escapes, and brings away a little box of this direful commodity.

Of the dreadful and sudden effect of this poison, the author saw many instances. He mentions, among others, the execution of thirteen young ladies of the emperor's seraglio, who, having been convicted of infidelity to his bed, were condemned to die by the poison of Upas, which is considered in Java, like the axe in England, an honourable instrument of death. At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, these unhappy victims were led into a court in the palace, where a row of thirteen posts had been erected. To these they were bound. As they stood trembling, they were obliged to confess the justice of their sentence; which each of them did, by laying one hand on the koran and the other on her breast. When these confessions were finished and a few religious ceremonies, on a sign given by the judge,

an executioner stepped forward, who bared their breasts, and amidst their cries and shrieks, with a poisoned lancet made a slight incision in each. The author says he stood by, with his watch in his hand. In five minutes they were seized with convulsive spasms, excruciating agonies succeeded, and in sixteen minutes they were all dead. A frightful change came on. From being objects of beauty, they became spectacles of horror. Livid spots broke out upon them. Their faces swelled, their cheeks became blue, and their eyes yellow.

The author says that, on the coast of Macassar, there are found trees very like the Upas of Java, but not so malignant. If so, it is probable that all these trees are of the same kind; only the Java Upas has found a situation where its poisonous qualities are more sublimed.

Dr. Darwin, in his *Loves of the Plants*, has given us a picture of the situation of this dreadful tree, the existence of which he seems to believe.

‘ Where seas of glass with gay reflections smile  
Round the green coasts of Java’s palmy isle,  
A spacious plain extends its upland scene,  
Rocks rise on rocks, and fountains gush between.

Soft breathes the breeze ; eternal summers reign,  
And showers prolific bless the soil—in vain !  
No spicy nutmeg scents the vernal gales :  
No towering plaintain shades the mid-day vales :  
No grassy mantle hides the sable hills :  
No flowery chaplet crowns the trickling rills :  
No step, retreating, on the sand impressed,  
Invites the visit of a second guest.  
Fierce in dread silence, on the blasted heath  
Fell Upas sits.'

So long a period has now elapsed since the fabulous story of the Upas valley was exploded that Gilpin's description and the half credence which he gives to the false account of Foersch will probably cause many readers to smile. But it must be remembered that Foersch's story was published about the time that this 'Forest Scenery' was written. A sufficient apology for the credence given by Gilpin to the romantic tale, and an indication, at the same time, of the hold which it has taken on the popular fancy is furnished by the fact that, even now, not a few persons will be found amongst the cursory readers of books, who have some dim idea that 'somewhere in Asia' there exists a blighted valley, where all living things—animals and plants—have been poisoned by the effluvia from the fearful Upas Tree. And many writers who well know the truth of the matter still indulge, from time to time, in imagery suggested by the fable of the poisonous Upas valley. 'Of the dreadful and sudden,' or comparatively sudden, effect of the prepared juice of the poison

tree, popularly called the Upas Tree, when injected into the blood of an animal, bird, or human being, there is, of course, no doubt, for death ensues almost immediately.—  
ED.

That I may connect this little biographical history of trees with the principal subject of my book, I shall conclude it with an account of two or three celebrated trees from New Forest, in Hampshire.

The first I shall mention is that famous tree against which the arrow of Sir Walter Tyrrel glanced, which killed William Rufus.

Leland tells us, and Camden \* from him, that the death of Rufus happened at a place in New Forest called Througham, where a chapel was erected to his memory. But I meet with no place of the name of Througham in New Forest; and neither the remains, nor the remembrance, of any chapel. It is probable that *Througham* might be what is now called *Fritham*, where the tradition of the country seems to have fixed the *spot* with more credibility than *the tree*. The chapel might

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\* See Camden's Account of New Forest.

only have been some little temporary oratory, which, having never been endowed, might speedily have fallen to decay; but the tree, it is probable, would be noticed at the time by everybody who lived near it, and by strangers who came to see it; and it is as probable that it could never be forgotten afterwards. They who think a tree insufficient to record a fact of so ancient a date, may be reminded that seven hundred years (and it is not more since the death of Rufus) make no extraordinary period in the existence of an Oak. About fifty years ago, however, this tree became so decayed and mutilated that in all probability the spot would have been forgotten, if some other memorial had not been raised. Before the stump therefore was eradicated, a triangular stone was erected by the late Lord Delaware, who lived in one of the neighbouring lodges, on the three sides of which stone the following inscriptions are engraven,—

## 1.

Here stood the Oak Tree, on which an arrow, shot by Sir Walter Tyrrel at a stag, glanced and



struck King William II., surnamed Rufus, in the breast, of which stroke he instantly died, on the 2nd of August, 1100.

## 2.

King William II. being thus slain, was laid on a cart belonging to one Purkess ; and drawn from hence to Winchester, and buried in the cathedral church of that city.

## 3.

That the spot, where an event so memorable happened, might not hereafter be unknown, this stone was set up by John Lord Delaware, who has seen the tree growing in this place.

Lord Delaware asserts plainly that he had seen the Oak Tree ; and, as he lived much on the spot, he had probably other grounds for the assertion, besides the tradition of the country. That matter however rests on his authority.

It is not necessary to add much to the preceding account of the Rufus Tree and the Rufus Stone. It was in 1745 that Lord Delaware had, according to his own statement, seen the fatal Oak standing on the spot where the Red King is believed to have fallen. The same cause

which, in all probability, promoted the disappearance of the tree, facilitated the destruction of the stone erected by Lord Delaware, namely, the depredations of relic hunters. In consequence of the mutilation of the first Memorial Stone, and of the defacement of the original inscription, a new one, encased in iron, with the same inscription as that on the original one, wrought on the iron, was erected on the site of the old stone, in 1841, by Mr. William Sturges Bourne. This is the memorial which now stands in Canterton Glen, the reputed scene of the death of Rufus. We have, in another place,\* fully given our own reasons for our belief that the spot marked by the Rufus Stone was the one on which the Red King actually fell.—Ed.

The next tree I shall exhibit from New Forest, is the *Groaning Tree* of Badesley, a village about two miles from Lymington. The history of the Groaning Tree is this. About forty years ago, a cottager, who lived near the centre of the village, heard frequently a strange noise behind his house, like that of a person in extreme agony. Soon after it caught the attention of his wife, who was then confined to her bed. She was a timorous woman, and, being greatly alarmed, her husband

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\* In *Our Woodland Trees*.

endeavoured to persuade her that the noise she heard was only the bellowing of the stags in the forest. By degrees, however, the neighbours on all sides heard it, and the thing began to be much talked of. It was by this time plainly discovered that the groaning noise proceeded from an Elm, which grew at the end of the garden. It was a young, vigorous tree, and to all appearance perfectly sound.

In a few weeks the fame of the Groaning Tree was spread far and wide, and people, from all parts, flocked to hear it. Among others, it attracted the curiosity of the late Prince and Princess of Wales, who resided, at that time, for the advantage of a sea bath, at Pilewell, the seat of Sir James Worsley, which stood within a quarter of a mile of the Groaning Tree.

Though the country people assigned many superstitious causes for this strange phenomenon, the naturalist could assign no physical one that was in any degree satisfactory. Some thought it was owing to the twisting and friction of the roots. Others thought it proceeded from water, which had collected in the body of the tree, or

perhaps from pent air. But no cause that was alleged, appeared equal to the effect. In the meantime the tree did not always groan, sometimes disappointing its visitants; yet no cause could be assigned for its temporary cessations, either from seasons or weather. If any difference was observed, it was thought to groan least when the weather was wet, and most when it was clear and frosty; but the sound, at all times, seemed to arise from the root.

Thus the Groaning Tree continued an object of astonishment during the space of eighteen or twenty months, to all the country around; and, for the information of distant parts, a pamphlet was drawn up, containing a particular account of all the circumstances relating to it.

At length, the owner of it, a gentleman of the name of Forbes, making too rash an experiment to discover the cause, bored a hole in its trunk. After this it never groaned. It was then rooted up, with a further view to make a discovery; but still nothing appeared which led to any investigation of the cause. It was universally, however, believed that there was no trick in the affair, but

that some natural cause really existed, though never understood.

The last celebrated tree, which I shall present to the reader from New forest, is the Cadenham Oak, which buds every year in the depth of winter. Cadenham is a village about three miles from Lyndhurst, on the Salisbury road.

Having often heard of this Oak, I took a ride to see it on the 29th of December, 1781. It was pointed out to me among several other Oaks, surrounded by a little forest stream, winding round a knoll on which they stood. It is a tall, straight plant of no great age, and apparently vigorous, except that its top has been injured, from which several branches issue in the form of pollard shoots. It was entirely bare of leaves, as far as I could discern, when I saw it, and undistinguishable from the other Oaks in its neighbourhood, except that its bark seemed rather smoother—occasionally, I apprehend, only by frequent climbing.

Having had the account of its *early budding* confirmed on the spot, I engaged one Michael Lawrence, who kept the White Hart, a small ale-house in the neighbourhood, to send me some of

the leaves to Vicar's Hill, as soon as they should appear. The man, who had not the least doubt about the matter, kept his word, and sent me several twigs, on the morning of the 5th of January, 1782, a few hours after they had been gathered. The leaves were fairly expanded, and about an inch in length. From some of the buds two leaves had unsheathed themselves; but, in general, only one.

Through what power in Nature this strange, premature vegetation is occasioned, I believe no naturalist can explain. I sent some of the leaves to one of the ablest botanists we have had, the late Mr. Lightfoot, author of the *Flora Scotica*, and was in hopes of hearing something satisfactory on the subject. But he is one of those philosophers, who are never ashamed of ignorance, where attempts at knowledge are mere conjecture. He assured me, that he neither could account for it in any way, nor did he know of any other instance of premature vegetation, except the Glastonbury Thorn.

The *philosophers of the forest*, in the meantime, account for the thing at once, through the influ-

ence of old Christmas-day—universally believing that the Oak buds on that day, and that only. The same opinion is held with regard to the Glastonbury Thorn by the common people of the West of England. But, without doubt, the germination there is gradual ; and forwarded or retarded by the mildness or severity of the weather. One of its progeny, which grew in the gardens of the duchess dowager of Portland, at Bulstrode, had its flower-buds perfectly formed, so early as the 21st of December, 1781, which is fifteen days earlier than it ought to flower, according to the vulgar prejudice.\*

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\* In the *Salisbury Journal*, January 10th, 1786, the following paragraph appeared :—

‘In consequence of a report that has prevailed in this country for upwards of two centuries, and which by many has been almost considered as a matter of faith, that the Oak at Cadenham, in the New Forest, shoots forth leaves on every old Christmas Day, and that no leaf is ever to be seen on it, either before or after that day, during the winter, a lady, who is now on a visit in this city, and who is attentively curious in everything relative to art or Nature, made a journey to Cadenham, on Monday, the 3rd instant, purposely to inquire, on the spot, about the production of this famous tree. On her arrival near it, the usual guide was ready to attend her ; but, on his being

This early spring, however, of the Cadenham

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desired to climb the Oak, and to search whether there were any leaves then on it, he said it would be to no purpose, but that if she would come on the Wednesday following (Christmas Day) she might certainly see thousands. However, he was prevailed on to ascend, and on the first branch which he gathered appeared several fair new leaves, fresh sprouted from the buds, and nearly an inch and a half in length. It may be imagined that the guide was more amazed at this premature production than the lady ; for so strong was his belief in the truth of the whole tradition, that he would have pledged his life that not a leaf was to have been discovered on any part of the tree before the usual hour.

‘ But though the superstitious part of this ancient legend is hence confuted, yet it must be allowed that there is something very uncommon and curious in an Oak’s constantly shooting forth leaves at this unseasonable time of the year, and that the cause of it well deserves the philosophical attention of the botanist. In some years there is no doubt but that this Oak may show its *first* leaves on the Christmas morning, as probably as on a few days before ; and this, perhaps, was the case in the last year, when a gentleman of this neighbourhood, a nice and critical observer, strictly examined the branches, not only on the Christmas morn, but also on the day prior to it. On the first day not a leaf was to be found, but on the following every branch had its complement, though they were then but just shooting from the buds, none of them being more than a quarter of an inch long. The latter part of the story may easily be credited, that no leaves are to be seen on it after Christmas Day, as large parties yearly assemble about the Oak on that morning, and regularly strip every appearance of a leaf from it.’



Oak is of very short duration. The buds, after unfolding themselves, make no further progress ; but immediately shrink from the season, and die. The tree continues torpid, like other deciduous trees, during the remainder of the winter, and vegetates again in the spring, at the usual season. I have seen it, in full leaf, in the middle of summer, when it appeared, both in its form and foliage, exactly like other Oaks.

I have been informed that another tree, with the same property of early germination, has been lately found near the spot where Rufus's monument stands. If this be the case, it seems, in some degree, to authenticate the account which Camden \* gives us of the scene of that prince's death : for he speaks of the premature vegetation of that very tree on which the arrow of Tyrrel glanced ; and the tree I now speak of, if it really exist, though I have no sufficient authority for it, might have been a descendant of the old Oak, and have inherited its virtues.

It is very probable, however, there may be

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\* See Camden's Account of New Forest.

other Oaks in the forest, which may likewise have the property of early germination. I have heard it often suspected that people gather buds from other trees, and carry them, on old Christmas-day, to the Oak at Cadenham, from whence they pretended to pluck them. For that tree is in such repute, and resorted to annually by so many visitants, that I think it could not easily supply all its votaries, without foreign contributions. Some have accounted for this phenomenon by supposing that leaves have been preserved over the year by being steeped in vinegar. But I am well satisfied this is not the case. Mr. Lightfoot, to whom I sent the leaves, had no such suspicion.

Mr. Wise in his work on the New Forest, already referred to, says concerning this famous tree, 'To the east, about two miles along the Southampton Road, lies the village of Cadenham, famous for its Oak, which, like the Glastonbury Thorn, buds on Christmas Eve. The popular tradition in the neighbourhood runs, that, as the weather is harder, it shows more leaves, and refusing the present chronology, only buds on old Christmas night. As in most things, there is some little truth in the story. Doubtless in some of the mild winters which visit Hamp-

shire, the tree shows a few buds, as at that time I have seen others do in various parts of the forest. Of course, they are all nipped by the first approach of severe weather, which, however, seldom happens in the warm south-west coast till the new year.' (Page 110). During a recent visit to the Cadenham Oak—which is still living—(in the present year, 1879) we were satisfied, from inquiries we made, as to the correctness of the statements respecting its budding at Christmas; though, when we saw it, just putting on its spring foliage, it was, if anything, less forward in leaf than the majority of the other Oaks in the forest. Its trunk is now hollow, and half of the shell is gone. We took the girth of the half bole at three feet from the ground and found it eight and a half feet. Colonel Esdaile, of Burley Manor, informs us that at Burley is a tree called 'The Miracle Oak,' which, like its congener at Cadenham, also buds at Christmas time.—ED.

Another tree worth pointing out in New Forest, is an immense Yew, which stands in the church-yard at Dibden. It is now, and probably has been during the course of the last century, in the decline of life. But its hollow trunk still supports three vast stems, and measures below them about thirty feet in circumference—a girth which perhaps no other Yew Tree in England can exhibit.

Though its age cannot be ascertained, we may easily suppose it has been a living witness of the funerals of, at least, a dozen generations of the inhabitants of the parish.

From Mr. W. Gascoigne Roy, of Byams, Marchwood, we learn that the old Yew Tree in Dibden Churchyard has now disappeared. During a severe gale on the 30th of November, 1836, the larger portion of its trunk was uprooted and fell to the ground. Not very long since a part of its stump was visible, but that has now become lost to sight. A table made from its wood is in the possession of the family of Mr. Gray, the late Rector of Dibden. Mr. Roy adds,—‘There is a juvenile Yew, of something under a hundred years old, close to the spot where the old Yew stood,—possibly a seedling from it.’—Ed.

But it is not only to exhibit these venerable remains of antiquity, that I would draw the curious to *this spot*; but for the sake also of the views which it presents. From this lofty stand, the eye looks down, over a woody bottom, upon the bay of Southampton, spread far and wide below it; covered with shipping, and extending like a vast lake. Far up the bay, on the opposite side, the hazy towers of Southampton appear shooting into

the water ; and, beyond all, the opening of the river Itching, and the faint streaks of a distant country, stretching away, till it is lost in the high grounds beyond Winchester. In another direction the eye is carried down the bay, along the wooded shores of Netley Abbey, and over a remote distance, till the view is closed by the rising grounds of Portsdown.

The last tree I shall introduce from New Forest, is remarkable for exhibiting a very uncommon instance of the power of vegetation. About ten years ago, among the ruins of the wall which formerly surrounded the Abbey of Beaulieu, stood an Oak, contiguous to a part of the wall, and extended one of its principal limbs in close contact, along the summit of it. This limb, at the distance of about three yards from the parent tree, formed a second stem upon the wall, by shooting a root into some fissure, in which it probably found a deposit of soil. This root, running along the bottom of the wall, and finding some crannies in it, rose twice again through it, and formed a third and a fourth considerable stem, each at the distance of about three yards

from its neighbour. The fourth of these stems shot a branch again along the summit of the wall, and in close contact with it, forming a fifth stem in the same manner that the parent tree had formed the second. This last stem is again making an effort on the wall to extend this curious mode of vegetation still further. In a great storm which happened in February, 1781, a part of the wall was blown down, and those two stems with it, which were nearest the parent tree. Each of these stems was about four or five feet in diameter, and the timber of them was sold for thirty shillings, which shows their bulk was not trifling. We seldom meet with an instance of so intimate a connexion between an Oak Tree and a stone wall.

Lord Henry Scott has kindly made inquiries for us as to the Beaulieu Oak, whose curious mode of growth is described by Gilpin in the preceding paragraph, but without being able to find any trace of the tree, or to hear of any tradition relating to it. The whole of the paragraph concerning this Oak was added by Gilpin to the second edition of the 'Forest Scenery,' published in 1794; and though it would appear—from the words, 'This last stem is again making an effort,' &c.—that when Gilpin wrote the

paragraph the Oak was still living, it will be noticed that, in first mentioning it, he says 'About ten years ago,' &c., 'stood an Oak.' Possibly the entire tree may have disappeared before the *publication* of the 'Forest Scenery,' the manuscript of which was written, as our Author stated, ten years before it was first published.—ED.





BOOK II.



COMBINATIONS OF TREES.




## Combinations of Trees.

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### SECTION I.

#### TREES IN CLUMPS.

FROM considering trees as *individuals*, we proceed next to consider them under their various *combinations*; among which *clumps* are the simplest.

What number of trees make a *clump* no rules of art prescribe. The term has rather a *relative* meaning. In scenes brought near the eye we call three or four trees a clump; but in distant and extensive scenery we scruple not to use the term for any smaller detached part of a wood, though it may consist of some hundreds. But though the term admits not of exact definition, I shall en-

deavour, by amplification, to make the ideas contained under it as distinct as I can.

We distinguish, then, two kinds of clumps; the *smaller* and the *larger*; confining the former chiefly to the *foreground*, and considering the latter as the ornament of a *distance*.

With regard to the *smaller clump* its chief beauty arises from *contrast in the parts*. We have seen that in *single trees* each must have its characteristic beauty; it has nothing else to depend on. But in *combination* the beauty of the *individual* is not required; the *whole clump together* must produce the effect.

To enumerate all the sources of beautiful contrast which contribute to produce this effect might be difficult. I shall cursorily suggest a few.

In the first place the *relative* situation of trees with regard to *each other* should be considered. Three trees, or more, standing in a line, are formal. In the natural wood you rarely see this formality; and yet even *three trees in a line* will be greatly assisted by the different directions of the several trunks, and by the various forms, distances, and growth of the trees.



Three ill-shaped trees, formed into a good group.

[Page 241.]



If three trees do not stand in a line they must of course stand in a triangle, which produces a great variety of pleasing forms.

If a fourth tree be added it stands beautifully near the middle of the triangle, of whatever form the triangle may be. If it be equilateral, and the tree placed exactly in the middle, there are three points, as you walk round the triangle, from which it will appear offensively regular. Remarks, however, of this kind affect only young trees, while their stems are tall and similar. As they increase, their different modes of growth, the swelling of their roots, the habits they contract from winds, their ramification, their lateral branches, and other accidental circumstances, introduce endless varieties among them, and blot out many of those little formalities which attend their youth; though, after all, the *artificial* clump will rarely attain the beauty of the *natural* one.

If the *clump* consist of still more trees than four, a greater variety among the stems will, of course, take place—double triangles, irregular quincunxes, and other pleasing shapes, which

may be seen exemplified in every wood of natural growth.

The branches, also, are as much a source of contrast as the stem. To be picturesque they must intermingle with each other without heaviness—they must hang loosely, but yet with *varied looseness* on every side—and if there be one superior apex there may be two or three others that are subordinate, according to the size of the clump.

Different kinds of trees, also, in the same clump occasion often a beautiful contrast. There are few trees which will not harmonize with trees of a different kind, though perhaps the most simple and beautiful contrasts arise from the various modes of growth in the same species. We often see two or three Oaks intermingle their branches together in a very pleasing manner. When the Beech is full grown, it is generally (in a luxuriant soil at least) so heavy that it rarely blends happily either with its own kind or with any other. The Silver Fir too, we have observed, is a very unaccommodating tree. So also are other Firs; indeed all that taper to a point. Not so the



Pine race. They are clump-headed, and unite well in composition. With these, also, the Scotch Fir leagues; from little knots of which we often see beautiful contrasts arise. When they are young and luxuriant, especially if any number of them above four or five are planted together, they generally form a heavy, murky spot; but, as they acquire age, this heaviness goes off, the inner branches decay, the outward branches hang loosely and negligently, and the whole has often a good effect, unless they have been planted too closely. I am rather doubtful how far deciduous trees mix well in a clump with evergreens; and yet we sometimes see a natural good effect of light and shade from the darkness of the Fir contrasting, agreeably, with the sprightly green of a deciduous tree just coming into leaf. In this, however, I am clear, that, if they are mixed, they ought not to be planted, as they often are, alternately, but each kind together.

Contrasts again arise from the mixture of trees of unequal growth—from a young tree united with an old one—a stunted tree with a luxuriant one—and sometimes from two or three trees, which, in

themselves, are ill-shaped, but, when combined, are pleasing. Inequalities of all these kinds are what chiefly give Nature's planting a superiority over art.

The form of the foliage is another source of contrast. In one part, where the branches intermingle, the foliage will be interwoven and close; in another, where the boughs of each tree hang separately, the appearance will be light and easy.

But whatever beauty these *contrasts* exhibit, the effect is totally lost unless the *group* be *well-balanced*. This is as necessary in a *combination of trees* as in a *single tree*.<sup>\*</sup> The clump is considered as *one* object, and the support of the *whole* must depend on the several trunks and leading branches of which it is composed. We do not expect the minutiae of scale and weight; if no side preponderate so as to hurt the eye it is enough. Unless, however, the group have suffered some external injury it is seldom deficient in point of balance. Nature always conducts the stems and branches in such easy forms, wherever

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\* See page 12.



A well-balanced group.

[Page 242.]





An ill-balanced group.

[Page 247.]



there is an opening, and fills up all with so much nice contrivance, and at the same time with so much picturesque irregularity, that we rarely wish for an amendment in her works. So true, indeed, this is, that nothing is so dangerous as to take away a tree from a group. You will infallibly destroy the balance, which can never again be restored.

Thus far we have considered a *group* as a *single independent* object—as the object of a *foreground*—consisting of such a confined number of trees as the eye can fairly include at once. And when trees strike our fancy, either in the wild scenes of Nature or in the improvements of art, they will ever be found in combinations similar to these.

When the *group* grows *larger* it becomes qualified only as a *remote object*—combining with vast woods, and forming a part of some extensive scene, either as a first, a second, or a third distance.

The great use of the *larger group* is to lighten the heaviness of a *continued distant wood*, and connect it gently with the plain, that the transi-

tion may not be too abrupt. All we wish to find, in a group of this kind, is *proportion* and *general form*.

With respect to *proportion*, the detached group must not encroach too much on the dignity of the wood it aids, but must observe a proper subordination. A large tract of country covered with wood will admit several of these auxiliary groups of different dimensions. But, if the wood be of a smaller size, the groups, also, must be smaller and fewer.

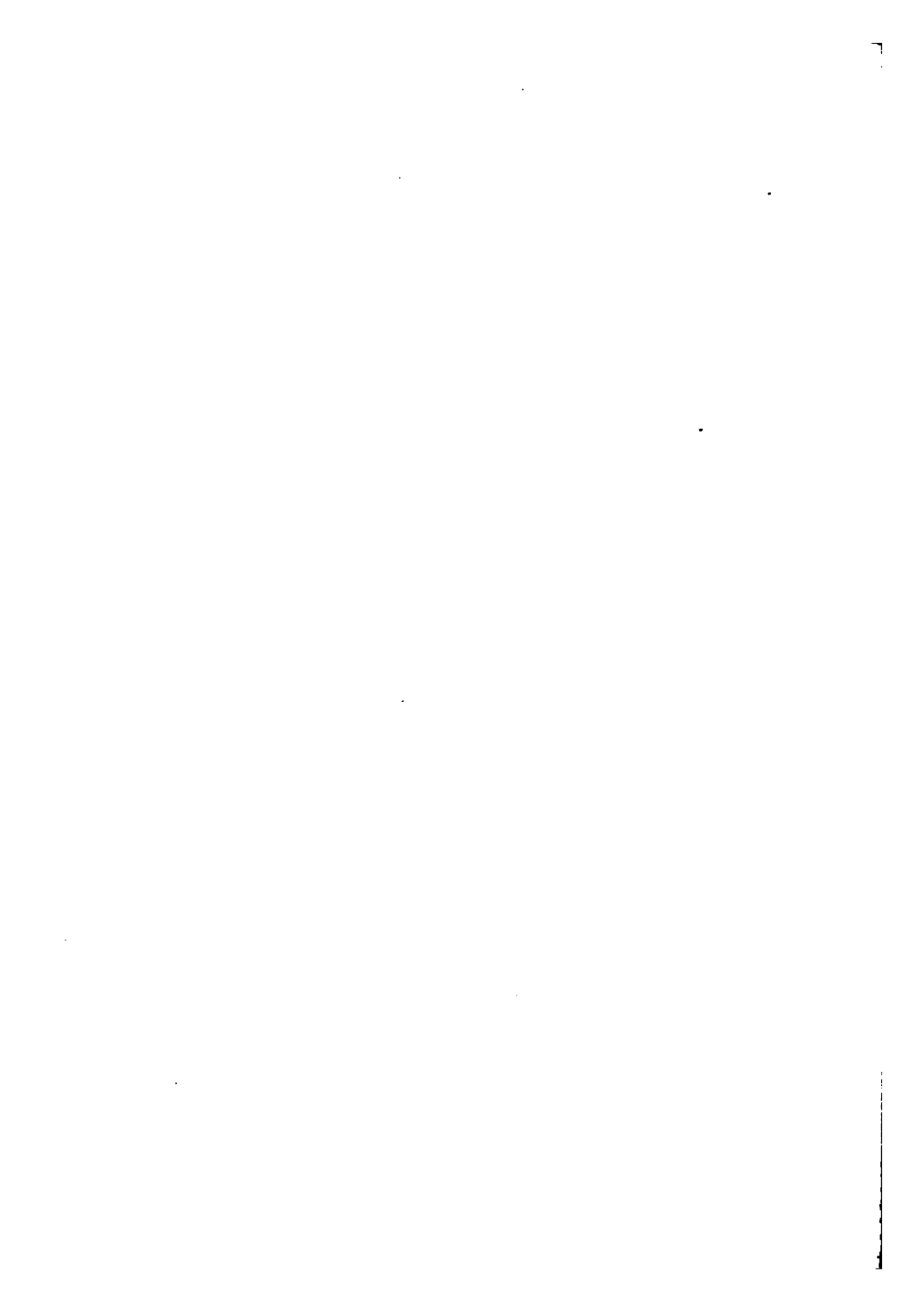
We observed that in a *single tree* we expected elegance in the *parts*. In the *smaller groups* this idea was relinquished, and, in its room, we expected a *general contrast* in trunks, branches, and foliage. But, as the group becomes larger, and recedes in the landscape, all these pleasing contrasts are lost, and we are satisfied with a *general form*. No *regular form* is pleasing. A group on the side of a hill, or in any situation where the eye can more easily investigate its shape, must be circumscribed by an irregular line, in which it is required that the undulations, both at the base and summit of the group, should be strongly



marked, as the eye, probably, has a distinct view of both. But, if it be seen only on the top of a hill, or along the distant horizon (as in these situations the base is commonly lost in the varieties of the ground) a variation in the line which forms the summit will be sufficient.

As a large tract of wood requires a few large groups to connect it gently with the plain; so these large groups themselves require the same service from a single tree, or a few trees, according to their size.

These observations respect chiefly the vast scenes of Nature, which are but little under the control of art. While they assist us, however, in judging of the natural scene, they are, in many respects, applicable to the embellished one. To the painter's use they are most adapted, whose business it is to introduce his trees in the happiest manner, whether he spread them over his canvas in vast woods, or break them into *smaller* or *larger combinations*.



## SECTION II.

### PARK SCENERY.



FROM *clumps* we naturally proceed to *park scenery*, which is generally composed of *combinations of clumps*, interspersed with lawns. When it consists of large districts of wood it rather takes the name of forest scenery.

The park, which is a species of landscape little known, except in England, is one of the noblest appendages of a great house. Nothing gives a mansion so much dignity as these home demesnes, nor contributes more to mark its consequence. A great house, in a course of years, naturally acquires space around it. A park, therefore, is the natural appendage of an ancient mansion.

To the size and grandeur of the house the park should be proportioned. *Blenheim Castle* with a paddock around it, or a small villa in the middle of Woodstock Park, would be equally out of place.

The house should stand nearly in the centre of the park; that is, it should have ample room on every side. Petworth House, one of the grandest piles in England, loses much of its grandeur from being placed at the extremity of the park, where it is elbowed by a church-yard.\*

The *exact spot* depends entirely on the ground. There are grand situations of various kinds. In general, houses are built first, and parks are added afterwards by the occasional removal of enclosures. A great house stands, most nobly, on an elevated knoll, from whence it may overlook the distant country; while the woods of the park screen the regularity of the intervening cultiva-

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\* Petworth House has the still further disadvantage of being awkwardly placed near the town. A very full and interesting account of this mansion occurs in a little volume entitled *Petworth: a Sketch of its History and Antiquities*, by the Rev. F. H. Arnold.—ED.

tion. Or it stands well on the side of a valley, which winds along its front, and is adorned with wood, or a natural stream hiding and discovering itself among the trees at the bottom. Or it stands with dignity, as Longleat does, in the centre of demesnes, which shelve gently down to it on every side. Even on a dead flat I have seen a house draw beauties around it. At the seat of the late Mr. Bilson Legge (now Lord Stawel's), in the middle of Holt Forest, a lawn, unvaried by a single swell, is yet varied with clumps of different forms, receding behind each other in so pleasing a manner as to make an agreeable scene.

By these observations I mean only to show, that, in whatever part of a park a house may have been originally placed, it can hardly have been placed so awkwardly but that, in some way or other, the scenery may be happily adapted to it. There are some situations, indeed, so very untoward that scarce any remedy can be applied; as when the front of a house immediately urges on a rising ground. But such awkward situations are rare, and, in general, the variety in landscape is such that it may almost always

be brought, in one form or other, to serve the purposes of beauty. The many improvements of the ingenious Mr. Brown, in various parts of England, bear witness to the truth of these observations. The beauty, however, of park scenery is undoubtedly *best* displayed on a *varied surface*, where the ground swells and falls—where hanging lawns, screened with wood, are connected with valleys, and where one part is continually playing in contrast with another.

As the park is an appendage of the house, it follows that it should participate of its neatness and elegance. Nature, in all her great walks of landscape, observes this accommodating rule. She seldom passes abruptly from one mode of scenery to another; but generally connects different species of landscape by some third species, which participates of both. A mountainous country rarely sinks immediately into a level one; the swellings and heavings of the earth grow gradually less. Thus, as the house is connected with the country through the medium of the park, the park should partake of the neatness of the one and of the wildness of the other.

As the park is a scene either planted by art, or, if naturally woody, artificially improved, we expect a beauty and contrast in its *clumps* which we do not look for in the wild scenes of Nature. We expect to see its lawns and their appendages contrasted with each other in shape, size, and disposition; from which a variety of artificial, yet natural, scenes will arise. We expect that when trees are left standing as *individuals* they should be the most beautiful of their kind, elegant and well-balanced. We expect that all offensive trumpery and all the rough luxuriance of undergrowth should be removed, unless where it is necessary to thicken or connect a scene, or hide some staring boundary. In the wild scenes of Nature we have grander exhibitions, but greater deformities than are generally met with in the polished works of art. As we seldom meet with these *sublime* passages in improved landscape, it would be unpardonable if anything *disgusting* should appear.

The quaintness of Gilpin's style is seen in such an expression as that used in the preceding paragraph when he speaks of some of the wild undergrowth of a forest as

'offensive trumpery.' This language merely, however, discovers a certain amount of inconsistency in our Author; for it is evident that a deep love of Nature underlies all his writing. How delightedly, for instance, he turns his thoughts from the park to the wild wood is shown in the commencement of the succeeding chapter, where he exclaims joyously, 'From scenes of art let us hasten to the chief object of our pursuit, the wild scenes of Nature—the *wood*, the *copse*, the *glen*, and *open grove*.' No doubt *convenience* requires a certain trimness in the surroundings of our dwellings; but, for our part, we cannot allow that Nature ever produces aught but what is beautiful in her forestal undergrowths.—ED.

In the park scene we wish for no expensive ornament. Temples, Chinese bridges, obelisks, and all the laboured works of art, suggest inharmonious ideas. If a bridge be necessary, let it be elegantly plain. If a deer shed or a keeper's lodge be required, let the fashion of each be as simple as its use. Let nothing appear with ostentation or parade. Within restrictions, however, of this kind we mean not to include piles of *superior grandeur*. Such a palace as Blenheim Castle distributes its greatness far and wide. There, if the bridge be immense or the obelisk



superb, it is only what we naturally expect. It is the chain of ideas properly carried on, and *gradually lost*. My remarks regard only such houses as may be rich indeed and elegant, but have nothing in them of *superior magnificence*.

One ornament of this kind I should be inclined to allow, and that is a handsome gate at the entrance of the park; but it should be proportioned in richness and elegance to the house, and should also correspond with it in style. It should raise the first impression of what you are to expect. Warwick Castle requires a mode of entrance very different from Lord Scarsdale's at Kedleston, and Burleigh House very different from both. The park gate of Sion House is certainly elegant; but it raises the idea of a style of architecture which you must drop when you arrive at the house.

The road, also, through the park should bear the same proportion. It should be spacious, or moderate, like the house it approaches. Let it wind, but let it not take any deviation which is not well accounted for. To have the convenience of winding along a valley, or passing a commo-

dious bridge, or avoiding a wood or a piece of water, any traveller would naturally wish to deviate a little; and obstacles of this kind, if necessary, must be interposed. Mr. Brown was often happy in creating these artificial obstructions.

From every part of the approach, and from the ridings and favourite walks about the park, let all the boundaries be secreted. A view of paling, though in some cases it may be picturesque, is in general disgusting.

If a *natural* river or a *real* ruin embellish the scene, it may be a happy circumstance: let the best use be made of it; but I should be cautious in advising the *creation* of either. At least, I have rarely seen either ruins or rivers well manufactured. Mr. Brown, I think, has failed more in river-making than in any of his attempts. An artificial lake has sometimes a good effect, but neither propriety nor beauty can arise from it, unless the heads and extremities of it are perfectly well managed and concealed; and, after all, the success is hazardous. You must always suppose it a portion of a larger piece of water, and it is

not easy to carry on the imposition. If the house be magnificent, it seldom receives much benefit from an artificial production of this kind. Grandeur is rarely produced.

‘Seldom art  
Can emulate that magnitude sublime,  
Which spreads the native lake ; and, failing there,  
Her works betray their character and name,  
And dwindle into pools.’

The most natural inhabitants of parks are fallow deer, and very beautiful they are ; but flocks of sheep and herds of cattle are more useful, and, in my opinion, more beautiful. Sheep particularly are very ornamental in a park. Their colour is just that dingy hue which contrasts with the verdure of the ground, and the flakiness of their wool is rich and picturesque. I should wish them, however, to wear their natural livery ; not patched with letters, nor daubed with red ochre. To see the side of a hill spread with groups of sheep—or to see them through openings among the boles of trees, at a little distance, with a gleam of light falling upon them, is very picturesque.

As the garden (or *pleasure ground*, as it is commonly called,) approaches nearer the house than the park, it takes, of course, a higher polish. Here the lawns are shorn, instead of being grazed. The roughness of the road is changed into an elegant gravel walk ; and knots of flowers and flowering shrubs are introduced, yet blended with clumps of forest trees, which connect it with the park. Single trees, also, take their station here with great propriety. The spreading Oak or Elm are no disgrace to the most ornamented scene. It is the property of these noble plants to harmonize with every species of landscape. They equally become the forest and the lawn ; only, here, they should be beautiful in their kind, and luxuriant in their growth. Neither the scathed, nor the unbalanced, Oak would suit a polished situation.

Here, too, if the situation suits it, the elegant temple may find a place. But it is an expensive, a hazardous, and often a useless decoration. If more than one, however, be introduced in the same view, they crowd the scene, unless it be very extensive. More than two should in no

case be admitted. In the most polished landscape, unless Nature and simplicity lead the way, the whole will be deformed.

As a contrast to parks thus laid out in the simplicity of Nature, let us just throw our eyes over a park laid out with the formality of art. The comparison will not injure the principles we establish.

‘From Vauvrey, recrossing the Seine, we came to Muids. This château stands on a rising ground on the north side of it, and commands a fine prospect, having two long avenues of trees running down to the river. Adjoining to the house are pleasure gardens and a paddock, planted with timber trees in form of a star.’ \*

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\* See Ducarrel's *Norman Antiq.*, p. 42.



### SECTION III.

#### THE COPSE.



FROM scenes of art, let us hasten to the chief object of our pursuit, the wild scenes of Nature—the *wood*, the *copse*, the *glen*, and *open grove*.

Under the term *wood* we include every extensive combination of forest trees in a *state of Nature*. All such combinations, though without the privilege of forests, compose the same kind of scenery. The description, therefore, of such scenes will come most properly under the head of *forest views*, on which we shall hereafter dwell at large. At present, let us examine the smaller combinations ; and first the *copse*.

The *copse* is a species of scenery composed,

commonly, of forest trees intermixed with brushwood, which latter is periodically cut down in twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years. In its dismantled state, therefore, nothing can be more forlorn than the copse. The area is covered with bare roots and knobs, from which the brushwood has been cut, while the forest trees intermingled among them, present their ragged stems, despoiled of all their lateral branches, which the luxuriance of the surrounding thickets had choked.

In a very short time, however, all this injury which the copse has suffered is repaired. One winter only sees its disgrace. The next summer produces luxuriant shoots; and two summers more restore it almost to perfect beauty.

It matters little of what species of wood the copse is composed, for as it seldom, at best, exhibits a scene of picturesque beauty, we rarely expect more from it than a shady sequestered path, which it generally furnishes in great perfection. It is among the luxuries of Nature to retreat into the cool recesses of the full-grown copse from the severity of a meridian sun, and be serenaded by the humming insects of the shade,



whose continuous song has a more refreshing sound than the buzzing vagrant fly, which wantons in the glare of day ; and, as Milton expresses it,

‘ Winds her sultry horn.’

In distant landscape, the copse has seldom any effect. The beauty of wood in a distant view arises, in some degree, from its tuftings, which break and enrich the lights—but chiefly from its contrast with the plain—and from the grand shapes and forms occasioned by the retiring and advancing parts of the forest, which produce vast masses of light and shade, and give effect to the whole.

These beauties appear, rarely, in the copse. Instead of that rich and tufted bed of foliage, which the distant forest exhibits, the copse presents a meagre and unaccommodating surface. It is age which gives the tree its tufted form, and the forest its effect. A nursery of saplings produce it not, and the copse is little more. Nor does the intermixture of full-grown trees assist the appearance. Their clumpy heads blend ill with the spiry tops of the juniors. Neither have

they any connexion with each other. The woodman's judgment is shown in leaving the timber trees at proper intervals, that they may neither hinder each other's growth nor the growth of the underwood. But the woodman does not pretend to manage his trees with a view to picturesque beauty; and, from his management, it is impossible they should produce a mass of light and shade.

Besides, the copse forms no contrast with the plain, nor presents those beautiful projections and recesses which the skirts of the forest exhibit. A copse is a plot of ground portioned off for the purpose of nurturing wood. Of course, it must be fenced from cattle; and these fences, which are in themselves disgusting, generally form the copse into a square, a rhomboid, or some other figure; so that we have not only a deformity, but a want also of a connecting tie between the wood and the plain. Instead of a softened, undulating line we have a harsh fence.

The best effect which the copse produces is on the lofty banks of a river. I have the Wye particularly in my view. In navigating such a river

the deficiencies of this mode of scenery, as you view it upwards from a boat, are lost; and, in almost every state, it has a good effect. While it enriches the bank, its uncouth shape, unless the fence is too much in view, and all its other unpleasant appearances, are concealed.

When a winding walk is carried through a copse, which, as it will grow thin at the bottom and stemmy, must necessarily, in a course of years, even in point of picturesque beauty, be given to the axe—shall the whole be cut down together? Or shall a border be left, as is sometimes done, on each side of the walk?

This is a difficult question; but I think all should go together. Unless the border you leave be very broad it will have no effect, even at present. You will see through it; it will appear meagre; and will certainly never unite happily with the neighbouring parts, when they begin to grow. At least, let it not stand longer than one year. The rest of the copse will then be growing beautiful; and the border may be dispensed with, till it is replaced. But the best way certainly is, if you have courage, to cut the whole down to-

gether. In a little time, as we observed above, it will recover its beauty.

Nearly related to the copse, though more the genuine offspring of Nature, is the *thicket*. The thicket is an intermixture of underwood, chiefly of the thorny kind, wholly unprotected, and yet so close as to exclude all entrance. Of this species, however, we need say the less, as it is rarely found of any extension in an English forest. In small patches it is frequent. We often see a few thorns entangled and knit close together, standing out on the forest lawn, forming some pleasing, irregular shape, and frequently adorned with an Oak or two, which, from some casual acorn having struggled, by the force of vegetation, through the interstices of the thickets, gives dignity to what before was only a bush. Of these trees such thickets are often the satellites.

## SECTION IV.

### THE GLEN.



FROM the copse we proceed to the *glen*. A wide, open space, between hills, is called a *vale*. If it be of smaller dimensions, we call it a *valley*. But when this space is contracted to a *chasm*, it becomes a *glen*. A glen therefore is most commonly the offspring of a mountainous country; though it is sometimes found elsewhere, with its common accompaniments of woody banks and a rivulet at the bottom. I know few places where the glen may be seen in greater perfection than among the dreary plains of Northumberland, where we frequently find streams winding through deep, rocky valleys adorned with wood which the lofty screens protect.

The distinction made by Gilpin between a *vale* and a *valley* is not consistent with modern custom. The words are really synonymous—*vale* being only a convenient form, for the purposes of poetry, of *valley*. If any modern author makes a distinction, it is rather, we think, by characterizing the *larger* depression, between hills, a *valley*. A *chasm* is commonly understood to indicate a depression caused by disruption, either by volcanic or other agency. Such a depression might form a *glen*. A *glen* is necessarily a *valley*, but the latter is not necessarily a *glen*. The word *glen* is, doubtless, a somewhat elastic one, but it is ordinarily used to indicate a steep and narrow valley, of small size, shut in by rocky hills, and characterized by scenery which is more or less wild and impressive. It is just in this sense that Scott uses it in the introduction to the first canto of *Marmion* :—

‘ Low in its dark and narrow glen,  
You scarce the rivulet might ken,  
So thick the tangled green-wood grew,  
So feeble trilled the streamlet through : ’—Ed.

The circumstances which form the glen, it is evident, admit infinite variety. It may be more or less contracted. It may form one single sweep, or its deviations may be irregular. The wood may consist of full-grown trees, or of underwood, or of a mixture of both. The path which winds

through it may run along the upper part, or the lower. Or, lastly, the rivulet may foam among rocks; or it may murmur among pebbles; or it may form transparent pools, overhung with wood; or, which is often the case, it may be totally invisible, and an object only of the ear.

The most beautiful circumstances that attend the internal parts of a glen are the glades, or openings, which are found in it. If the whole were a thicket, like the *full-grown copse*, little beauty would result. An agreeable shade alone, in that case, must satisfy our expectations. But the glen, whose furniture is commonly of more fortuitous growth than that of the copse, and not so subject to periodical defalcations, exhibits, generally, more beautiful scenery. Particularly it abounds with frequent openings. The eye is carried down, from the higher grounds, to a sweep of the river—or to a little gushing cascade—or to the face of a fractured rock, garnished with hanging wood—or perhaps to a cottage, with its scanty area of lawn falling to the river, on one side, and sheltered by a clump of Oaks on the other; while the smoke, wreathing behind the

trees, disperses and loses itself as it gains the summit of the glen. Or, still more beautifully perhaps, the eye breaks out, at some opening, into the country, enriched with all the varieties of distant landscape—a winding stream—plains and woods melting together—and blue mountains beyond.

As an object of distance, also, the woody glen has often a good effect—climbing the sides of mountains, breaking their lines, and giving variety to their bleak and barren sides.

In many places you see the glen under the hands of improvement, and, when you happen to have a scene of this kind near your house, you cannot well have a more fortunate circumstance. But great care should be taken not to load it with ornament. Such scenes admit little art. Their beauty consists in their natural wildness; and the best rule is to add little, but to be content with removing a few deformities and obstructions. A good walk, or a path, there must be; and the great art will consist in conducting it, in the easiest and most natural way, to the spot where the cascade, the rock, or any other object which




the glen exhibits, may be seen to the best advantage. If a seat or two be thought necessary, let them be of the rudest materials, and their situation no way forced. I have often seen semi-circular areas, on these occasions, adapted to elegant seats, which have been fixed, either where openings happened to be presented, or were purposely cut through the woods. All this is awkward and disgusting. Let no formal preparation introduce a view. A parading preface always injures a story. The eye receives more pleasure from unexpected, casual circumstances than from objects perhaps of more real beauty, forced upon it with parade and ostentation.

But though we are averse to load these sweet recesses of Nature with false ornaments, yet, if such scenes make a part of the *immediate environs*, or *pleasure ground*, of a house, a proper degree of ornament will, of course, be required. The walk must be more artificial—its borders may be spread here and there, as in other decorated places, with flowers and flowering shrubs—the seats may be more elegant, and a temple, or other building, may *perhaps* find a place; but still the same chaste

spirit must regulate here, which presides over all other improvements. To run into *excess in ornament* is one of the most obvious errors of false taste. We frequently see the effect both of the *natural scene* and of the *artificial representation* destroyed merely by adorning.

## SECTION V.

### THE OPEN GROVE.

S the *glen* is sometimes found in the country we are about to describe, it was necessary just to mention it as a distinct species of woodland scenery: yet, as it is not one of its common features, we shall dwell no longer upon it, but hasten to the *open grove*. The open grove is composed of trees arising from a smooth area, which may consist either of Pines, or of deciduous trees. I have seen beautiful groves of both. The Pine grove will always be dry, as it is the peculiar quality of its leaves to suck up moisture: but in lightness, variety, and general beauty, the deciduous grove excels. If indeed

you wish to compose your grove in the gloomy style, the Pine race will best serve your purpose.

The open grove seldom makes a picturesque appearance. In *distant scenery*, indeed, it may have the effect of other woods; for the trees, of which it is formed, need not be separated from each other, as they often are in the copse; but being well massed together, may receive beautiful effects of light. When we *enter its recesses*, it is not so well calculated to please. There, it wants variety; and that, not only from the smoothness of the surface, but from the uniformity of the furniture—at least if it be an artificial scene; in which the trees, having been planted in a nursery, grow all alike, with upright stems. And yet a walk, upon a velvet turf, winding at pleasure among these natural columns, whose twisting branches at least admit some variety, with a spreading canopy of foliage over the head, is pleasing, and, in hot weather, refreshing. Sometimes we find the open grove of *natural growth*. It is then more various, and irregular, and becomes, of course, a more pleasing scene. And yet, when woods of this kind continue, as they some-

times do, in unpeopled countries, through half a province, they become tiresome; and prove that it is not wood, but variety of landscape, that delights the eye.

Sometimes the grove, in the neighbourhood of great houses, demands a little embellishment; and, as it is naturally less rude than the glen, it is therefore more patient of improvement. A seat, or a temple, according to the size and situation of the place, may here be a proper ornament. But, if the turf be neat, (though we do not often find it so under trees) or close grazed with sheep, or deer, no artificial walks are necessary. If the scene command no distant landscape, nor any view of consequence at hand, it will require, in itself, a greater share of ornament. But, still, simplicity must be the leading idea. One thing is absolutely necessary to complete the idea of a grove; its boundaries should be concealed. It is intended for a sequestered place, and should answer that idea.

I remember meeting with an ornamented scene of this kind, which was very pleasing. The grove extended along the brow of a gentle declivity;

and assumed, from that circumstance, a dark, close, gloomy appearance, in its deeper recesses : though its opening on the lawn was light, and airy, and agreeably connected with the ground. In the front of the grove stood a rude temple of Pan ; and the lawn, being a neat sheep walk, the whole, though highly polished, was characteristic, harmonious, and beautiful. .

The pleasing tranquillity of groves has ever been in high repute among the innocent and refined part of mankind.

‘ Groves were planted to console, at noon,  
The pensive wanderer in their shades. At eve  
The moonbeam, sliding softly in between  
The sleeping leaves, is all the light he wants  
For meditation.’

Indeed no species of landscape is so fitted for meditation. The forest attracts the attention by its grandeur ; and the park scene by its beauty : while the paths through copses, dells, and thickets, are too close, devious, interrupted, and, often, too beautiful, to allow the mind to be at perfect rest. But the uniform sameness of the grove leaves the eye disengaged ; and the feet,

wandering at pleasure, where they are confined by no path, want little direction. The mind, therefore, undisturbed, has only to retire within itself. Hence the philosopher, the devotee, the poet, all retreated to these quiet recesses; and

‘From the world retired,  
Conversed with angels, and immortal forms.’

In classic times the grove was the haunt of Gods :

‘Habitarunt dii quoque sylvas.’\*

And, in the days of Nature, before art had introduced a kind of combination against her, man had no idea of worshipping God in a *temple made with hands*. The *templum nemorale* † was the only temple he knew.

‘In the resounding wood  
All vocal beings hymned their equal God.’

We have a pleasing modern instance of this simple mode of worship in the accounts given us of Mr. Westley’s first preaching the Gospel in America. It was generally conducted in some

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\* Even the very gods inhabited groves.

† The grove used as a temple.

open part of the wide forests of the country. 'The woods resounded to the voice of the preacher, or to the singing of his numerous congregation, while their horses, fastened to the trees, formed a singular addition to the scene.' \*

To this idea, indeed, of the ancient *templum nemorale*, one of the earliest forms of the *artificial temple* seems to have been indebted. Many learned men † have thought the Gothic arch of our cathedral churches was an imitation of the natural grove. It arises from a lofty stem, or from two or three stems, if they be slender; which, being bound together, and spreading in every direction, cover the whole roof with their ramification. In the close recesses of the beechen grove we find this idea the most complete. The lofty, narrow aisle—the pointed arch—the clustered pillar, whose parts, separating without violence, diverge gradually to form the fretted roof, find there perhaps their earliest archetype.

Groves, too, were the scenes of superstition, as

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\* See Hampson's Memoirs of Westley.

† See a note in Bp. Warburton's edition of Pope's Epist. to Lord Burlington.



well as of religion. Here, the priests of Baal performed their profane rites : and here, the back-sliding Israelites used often to screen their idolatries. The strong ideas of superstition, which these gloomy retreats impressed upon the ignorance of early ages, are finely touched by Virgil. The passage I allude to is in the eighth book ; where the story of Evander is introduced. The whole country was then, as unpeopled countries commonly are, a mere forest ; and as the groves and woods presented themselves on every side, the venerable chief describing each scene to his illustrious guest, annexes to it some tale of horror, or some circumstance of religious awe.

‘Hinc lucum ingentem, quem Romulus acer asylum  
 Rettulit, et gelidâ monstrat sub rupe Lupercal,  
 Parrhasio dictum Panos de more Lycæi.  
 Nec non et sacri monstrat nemus Argileti ;  
 Testaturque locum, et lethum docet hospitibus Argi.  
 Hinc ad Tarpeiam sedem, et capitolia ducit,  
 Aurea nunc, olim sylvestribus horrida dumis.  
 Jam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestes  
 Dira loci : jam tum sylvam, saxumque timebant.  
 Hoc nemus, hunc, inquit, frondoso vertice collem,  
 (Quis deus, incertum est) habitat deus. Arcades ipsum  
 Credunt se vidiisse Jovem, cum sæpe nigrantem  
 Ægida concuteret dextrâ, nimbosque ciceret.’

Gilpin gives the following translation of these lines at the end of the volume ;—

‘ He shewed  
A grove, which Romulus, in after times,  
Made an asylum. Near it, rose a rock,  
Bedewed with weeping springs, sacred to Pan ;  
And once more sacred to the injured shade  
Of murdered Argiletus. Then he called aloud  
The gods to witness, that his soul abhorred  
The impious deed. To the Tarpeian rock  
He led the hero next, where now in pomp  
The capitol upheaves its splendid towers ;  
Then but a thicket, interwoven close,  
With Nature’s wildest products. Yet e’en then  
A superstitious awe, and holy fear  
O’erspread the scene. Doubtless some god, (what god  
We know not) holds his sacred residence  
Upon the wooded crest of yon dark grove.  
Oft when the storm, with brooding darkness, o’er  
That wood arises, the Arcadians see,  
Or think they see, the mighty Jove himself  
Rolling his thunder ; and with bare right arm  
Flashing his lightnings on a guilty land.’—Ed.

I cannot conclude this section better than with another quotation very beautifully adapted to the subject.


‘ Meditation here  
Takes down hours to moments. Here the heart  
Takes a useful lesson to the head ;  
And grows wiser, grow without its books.  
And wisdom, far from being one,

Have oft-times no connexion. Knowledge dwells  
In heads replete with thoughts of other men :  
Wisdom, in minds attentive to their own.  
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,  
The mere materials, with which wisdom builds,  
Till smoothed, and squared, and fitted to its place,  
Does but encumber, whom it seems t'enrich.  
Knowledge is proud, that it has learned so much :  
Wisdom is humble, that it knows no more.  
Books are not seldom talismans and spells,  
By which the magic arts of shrewder wits  
Holds an unthinking multitude enthralled.  
Some to the *fascination of a name*  
Surrender judgment hoodwinked. Some the *style*  
Infatuates ; and, through labyrinths and wilds  
Of error, leads them by a *tune* entranced.  
While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear  
The insupportable fatigue of thought ;  
And swallowing therefore, without pause or choice,  
The total grist unsifted, husks and all.  
But trees, and rivulets, and haunts of deer,  
And sheep-walks, populous with bleating lambs,  
And groves, in which the primrose ere her time  
Peeps through the moss, that clothes the Hawthorn root,  
Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth,  
Not shy as in the world, and to be won  
By slow solicitation, seize at once  
The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.'



## SECTION VI.

### THE FOREST.



HAVING thus considered various kinds of woody scenery, and traced the peculiar beauties of each, we proceed next to the *forest*, which, in a manner, comprehends them all. There are few extensive forests which do not contain, in some part or other, a specimen of every species of woody landscape. The wild forest view, indeed, differs essentially from the embellished one; though sometimes we find even the forest lawn in a polished state, when browsed by deer into a fine turf, and surrounded by stately woods. *Beauty*, however, is not the characteristic of the forest. Its peculiar dis-

tion is *grandeur* and *dignity*. The scenes we have hitherto considered are all within the reach of art; and, in fact, have all been the objects of improvement. But the forest disdains all human culture. On it, the hand of Nature only is impressed. The forest, like other beautiful scenes, *pleases the eye*; but its great effect is to *rouse the imagination*.

The word *forest* immediately suggests the idea of a *continued uninterrupted tract of woody country*. But forests, in general, are much more varied. They consist, indeed, of tracts of woody country; but these tracts are, at the same time, intermixed with patches of pasturage, which commonly bear the same proportion to the woods of the forest which lawns do to the clumps of a park. These intermingled scenes of wood and pasturage are again divided from other intermixtures of the same kind by wide heaths, which are sometimes bounded by a naked line of horizon, but more frequently skirted with wood. This intermixture of wood and pasturage, with large separations of heath, give a variety to the forest, which a boundless continuance of woody scenery could

not exhibit; though it must be acknowledged that, in many forests, and especially in New Forest, these tracts of heathy country are often larger than picturesque beauty requires.

Having given this *general idea* of the species of country which I mean to treat under the idea of a *forest*, I shall proceed to particulars. Let me just recall to the reader's memory what was observed before, that all *great woods*, diversified as forests are, (though not properly denominated *forests*, as not subject to *forest laws*) will, however, naturally fall under the description of forest scenery.\*

The forest, under the division of *wood*, *pasturage*, and *heath*, presents itself to us as a picturesque object in a double view—as the scenery of a *foreground*, and as the scenery of a *distance*. In both views it is equally an object of picturesque beauty; but, as its effects are different in each, I shall endeavour to delineate their respective beauties.

When we speak of forest scenery as a *fore-*

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\* See page 263.

*ground* we mean the appearance which its woods present when we approach their skirts or invade their recesses. Forests, in their nature, are woods *ab origine*—not *newly planted*, but *natural* woods *set apart* for the purposes of sheltering and securing game. The trees, therefore, of which these natural woods are composed, consist of all ages and sizes, from the ancient fathers of the forest to the scion and the seedling. They grow also in that wild, disordered manner which Nature prescribes—as the root casually runs which throws up the scion, or as the seed or acorn finds soil and room to establish itself and increase. But though the richness of the scenery depends greatly on this multifarious mixture, which masses and fills up all the various combinations, yet the most ancient trees of each species are the glory of sylvan landscape. Young trees, though even in distant views inferior to old, will, however, in that situation exhibit a better appearance than on the spot, where no forest scenery can fill the eye without a proper assemblage of such trees as have seen ages pass over them. These form those bold and rough exhibitions in



which the pride and dignity of *forest views* consist. We have already observed that the wild and rough parts of Nature produce the strongest effects on the imagination ; and, we may add, they are the only objects in landscape which please the picturesque eye. Everything trim and smooth and neat affects it coolly. Propriety brings us to acquiesce in the elegant and well-adapted embellishments of art ; but the painter who should introduce them on canvas, would be characterized as a man void of taste, and utterly unacquainted with the objects of picturesque selection. Such are the great materials which we expect to find in the skirts and internal parts of the forest—trees of every kind, but particularly the oldest and roughest of each. We examine, next, the *mode* of scenery which results from their combinations.

In speaking of the glen \* we observed that the principal beauty of it arose from those little openings or glades with which it commonly abounds. It is thus in the forest woods. The

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\* See page 269.

great beauty of these *close scenes* arises from the openings and recesses which we find among them.

By these I do not mean the *lawns* and *pasturage*, which I mentioned as one of the great divisions of forest scenery,\* but merely those little openings among the trees which are produced by various circumstances. A sandy bank or a piece of rocky ground may prevent the contiguity of trees and so make an opening; or a tree or two may have been blasted or have been cut down; or, what is the happiest of all circumstances, a winding road may run through the wood. The simple idea, which is varied among all these little recesses, is the exhibition of a few trees seen behind others. The varieties of this mode of scenery, simple as it is, are infinite. Nature is wonderfully fertile. The invention of the painter may form a *composition* more agreeable to the rules of his art than Nature commonly produces, but no invention can reach the varieties of *particular objects*.

Waterloo delighted in these *close forest scenes*.

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\* See page 286.

He penetrated their retreats, and, when he found a little opening or recess that pleased him, he fixed it on the spot. He studied its various forms—how the bold protuberances of an old trunk received the light and shade—how easily the large boughs parted, and how negligently the smaller were interwoven—how elegantly the foliage hung, and what various shapes its little tuftings exhibited. All these things he observed and copied with exact attention. His landscape, bare of objects, and of the simplest composition, had little to recommend it but the observance of the minutiae of Nature. These he characterized with truth, and these alone have given a value to his works.

On the other hand, Claude, Poussin, Salvator, and other masters, who exhibited Nature *more at large*, took greater liberties. Their landscapes were generally carried into remote distance, and the beauty of their extensive scenes depended more on *composition* and *general effect* than on the exact resemblance of *particular objects*.

But the scenery of the internal parts of a forest is not merely confined to trees. There is often

an opportunity of introducing a little more variety. The sandy bank mentioned above, the piece of rocky ground, or the winding road, are sometimes found in forests, and are always introduced with good effect. Some of the best of Waterloo's scenes are indebted to these circumstances for their beauty.

A pool of water, too, is a lucky incident. When it is shrouded with trees, and reflects, from its deep, black mirror the mossy branches of an Oak or other objects in its neighbourhood which have received a strong touch of sunshine, it never fails to please. But it must receive its black hue from clearness. Where a pool is the principal part of a little landscape, the least muddiness or stain from clay or filth of any kind robs it of its beauty.

'The green mantle of the standing pool,'

as Shakespeare calls it, hurts the eye, exceedingly, from its ambiguous texture. It possesses neither the character of land nor of water.

Nor is the cottage, which is often found in the woody scenes of the forest, a circumstance without

its effect. In *Nature*, at least, it pleases, not only as the embellishment of a scene, but, as it shows us a dwelling, where happiness may reside, unsupported by wealth—as it shows us a resource, where we may still continue to enjoy peace, though we should be deprived of all the favours of fortune. Yet on *canvas*, where the forest view is formally introduced, the cottage is an improper decoration. In *Nature*, the eye, sated with a profusion of rich forest scenes, often seizes even the humblest circumstance as an object of relief. But when a forest-scene is *simply* and *formally* introduced, it ought to appear like itself, with the appendages of greatness. There are seasons when a monarch may hold converse with the meanest of his subjects, without injuring his dignity; but it is not the season when he is seated on his throne. A forest scene, introduced in picture, is introduced with distinction, and calls for every appendage of grandeur to harmonize with it. The cottage offends. It should be a castle, a bridge, an aqueduct, or some other object that suits its dignity.

With regard to aqueducts, indeed, the Romans

never suffered wood to grow near them, lest its roots or seeds should insinuate themselves into the crannies of the stone, and injure the work. But there can be no impropriety, at this day, in the introduction of a ruined aqueduct amidst a woody scene, as trees of any magnitude may be supposed to have grown up since it had fallen to decay. The scenery about the celebrated ruins of Pont-du-Gard in Languedoc is woody; and the immediate environs of it have all the rich furniture—at least they had lately—that a painter would desire.

Besides forest trees, in which the dignity of woodland scenery consists, it is enriched by a variety of humble plants, which, filling up the interstices, mass and connect the whole. These, however rude, we only wish to remove when they straggle too far from the clumps with which they are connected, and appear as spots in the area or middle space between different combination.

A long catalogue might be given of these humble plants, which are so useful in this harmonizing work, but it would lead me into tedious detail. The Holly, however, should be distin-

guished in a general muster.\* In many situations it appears to great advantage; but particularly growing round the stem, as it often does, of some noble Oak, on the foreground, and filling up all the space to his lower boughs. In summer it is a fine appendage; and in autumn its brilliant leaf and scarlet berry make a pleasing mixture with the wrinkled bark, and hoary moss, and auburn leaves of the venerable tree which it encircles. The Hawthorn, too, performs the same office with good effect. Though as a *single bush* it is sometimes offensive;† yet entangled with an Oak, or mixing with other trees, it may be beautiful.

Nor are *shrubs* alone useful in harmonizing the forest; the larger kinds of *weeds* and wild flowers have their effect in filling up the smaller vacancies near the ground, and add to the richness of the whole. Among these, the heath, and broom, with their purple and yellow tints, the foxglove, with its pale red pendent bells, the wide-spreading dock, and many of the thistle

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\* See page 131.

† See page 133.

tribe, are very beautiful. The hue of the furze, too, is pleasant, but, in bloom, its luxuriant yellow is too powerful. Nothing can accompany it.

But, among all the minuter plants, fern is the most picturesque. I do not mean where it is spread in quantities, but where it is sparingly and judiciously introduced. In itself it is beautiful. We admire the form of its leaf—its elegant mode of hanging, and its dark-brown, polished stem. As an accompaniment, also, nothing is better suited to unite the higher plants with the ground; while its bright-green hue in summer, and its ochre tint in autumn, join each season with its correspondent tinge.

The Fern to which Gilpin refers is the Bracken—*Pteris aquilina*. It is this particular species, indeed, that most of the poets and many prose writers intend to indicate when they speak—somewhat vaguely—of ‘ferns’ as an ornament to the landscape; unaware, apparently, of the great differences which exist between the numerous species and varieties of Ferns to be found even in the British Islands. Though in an English forest many different species of our native Ferns are to be found, it is the Bracken which forms the most prominent and conspicuous feature amongst what our Author styles



'the minuter plants,' which make up the ground plan in forest scenery. In characterizing the Bracken as 'the most picturesque' of these 'minuter plants,' he discovers, we think, a true artistic feeling. It is too, we think, graceful and beautiful not only 'where it is sparingly and judiciously introduced,' but also—and indeed especially—'where it is spread in quantities.' The strikingly beautiful aspect of a forest glade, densely covered with tall forms of Bracken, must be seen to be fully and properly appreciated.—Ed.

The poet, indeed (who, with all his cant, is sometimes a truant to Nature), pays, in general, very little attention to these rougher objects of beauty. *His* foregrounds are commonly adorned with the livelier tints of Nature :

' Each beauteous flower ;  
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,  
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay,  
Broidering the ground.'

And, if he design to speak of ground embellished with these rough picturesque beauties, he disdainfully calls it a place where

' Nothing teems  
But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, burs,  
Losing both beauty and utility.'

Of all this undergrowth I know but one plant that is disagreeable, and that is the bramble. We sometimes see it with effect, scrawling along the fragments of a rock, or running among the rubbish of a ruin, and, though it is, even then, a coarse appendage, I should not wish to remove it from landscape. But as a *pendent plant* it has no beauty. It does not hang carelessly, twisting round every support, like the hop and others of the creeping tribe, but forms one stiff, unpliant curve. Nor has it any foliage to recommend it. In other pendent plants the leaf is generally luxuriant, and hangs loosely in rich festoons; but, in the suckers of a bramble, the leaf is harsh, shrivelled, and discoloured. In short, it is a plant which should not, I think, presume in landscape farther than has just been allowed: it has little beauty in itself, and harmonizes, as little, with anything around it; and may be characterized as the most insignificant of vegetable reptiles.

We are constrained to put in a plea for the Bramble. Far from regarding it as 'the most insignificant of vegetable reptiles,' we confess to a fondness for it, born, perhaps, of sunny recollections of schoolboy days and 'blackberry-

ing.' Though the thorny, fruit-bearing shrub may owe us many apologies for scratched fingers or torn clothes, we can forgive it everything for the pleasure it has afforded us. But we feel that, apart from the influence of association, the Bramble has an undoubted claim to be considered picturesque. To our mind, indeed, forest clumps and forest underwood would lose half their picturesqueness if deprived of this prickly trailer. Often, too, we have seen it produce what Gilpin, with quaint simplicity, calls 'a good effect,' when, having climbed over the matted vegetation which canopies the space, midway between opposing hedgebanks, in so many of the 'green lanes' of western England, it has dropped its tendrils down through the mass of green, reflecting the sunlight from its young and glossy leaves. Need we speak of the attraction of its pretty blossom, of the charm of its coloured fruit—first green, then red, then black—or of the rich hues of its autumnal foliage?—Ed.

But, however beautiful these minuter plants and wild flowers may be in the natural scene, yet no painter would endeavour to represent them with exactness. They are too common, too undignified, and too much below his subject. Instead of gaining the character of an exact copier of Nature by a nice representation of such trifles, he would be esteemed puerile, and pedantic. Fern

perhaps, or dock, if his piece be large, he might condescend to imitate; but if he wanted a few touches of red, or blue, or yellow, to enliven and enrich any particular spot on his foreground, instead of aiming at the exact representation of any natural plant, he will more judiciously give the tint he wants in a few random, general touches of something like Nature; and leave the spectator, if he please, to find out a resemblance. Botanical precision may please us in the flower pieces of Van Huysom; but it would be paltry and affected in the landscapes of Claude or Salvator. The following remark I found in a work of Dr. Johnson's, which I transcribe, not only because it is judicious, and may be introduced here in place, but because it affords a new argument to show the resemblance between poetry and painting. Johnson was a critic in the former, but I never heard that he was a judge of the latter. His opinion therefore, in a point of this kind, was unbiassed. 'The business of a poet,' says he, 'is, to examine—not the individual, but the species—to remark general, and large appearances. He does not number the streaks of the Tulip,

nor describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of Nature such prominent, and striking features, as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations (which one may have remarked, and another have neglected) for those characteristics, which are alike obvious to attention and carelessness.' \*

The object of a landscape painter should surely be to represent Nature exactly as she appears from the point of view of the spectator. As much, therefore, as the eye can clearly discern in the foreground of a scene should be as clearly—though, of course, in miniature—represented on the canvas. To attempt such exact representation of objects clearly discerned by the spectator we conceive to be in no sense puerile or undignified, but as the highest and noblest aim of art. The natural limitation of our vision no doubt greatly stimulates the imagination. When we are looking, for instance, upon forest scenery, we can clearly discern not the outlines only, but the details of immediately contiguous objects. Much, however, of what lies beyond the foreground is enveloped in a sort of mystery, until we have carefully explored all the nooks and crannies of the ground. Nature delights in these little mysteries, and they greatly add to our impres-


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\* Pr. of Abyssin. p. 68.

sions of beauty by their effect upon the imagination. A painter who endeavoured to give in detail what lay beyond the limits of the foreground, would be more than puerile, or pedantic. He should endeavour to render that part of the scene just as Nature shows it from the point of view which he selects.—Ed.

## SECTION VII.

### FOREST LAWNS AND FOREST HEATHS.

AVING thus taken a view of the internal parts of a forest, which consist chiefly of *foregrounds*, we shall now consider the forest in a light just the reverse, as consisting chiefly of *distances*. In both lights, it is greatly picturesque; and only more, or less so, in either, as the eye is more pleased with a close or a diffusive landscape.

We skirt and penetrate the recesses of the woods for the *closer view*; but we frequent the forest lawn and heath for the *distant one*. The beauty of those scenes (especially of the heath, which is a large surface), depends, it is true, in

a great degree, on the play and irregularities of the ground ; but chiefly it depends on the surrounding woods.

The forest lawn *in itself* is a mere field. It is only when adorned with the furniture of surrounding woods, that it produces its effect.

The forest heath, also, when it is level and bounded only by the horizon, has no charms for the eye. When it consists of well-mixed inequalities of ground, it gains somewhat more upon us. But when it is bounded by woods in various parts, and interspersed, here and there, with clumps, which gently unite its woody boundaries with its area, it becomes an interesting scene. Sometimes also a variety of furze, fern and other wild plants, stain it, in many parts, with beautiful tints. Often, too, a winding road passes through it, or different roads traversing each other. Herds of cattle, also, of different kinds continually frequent its open plains ; and when these circumstances happily unite, the heath becomes one of the beautiful scenes of the forest.

As it is distant wood, however, on which the forest lawn, and especially the forest heath, de-



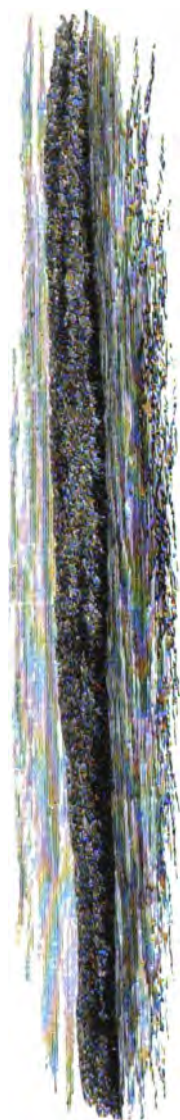
pend for their principal aid, I shall dwell a little on this copious subject, and shall consider its most pleasing circumstances under the two heads—of such as are *permanent*, and such as are *incidental*.

But before I enter on the subject, it may not be amiss to remind the reader once more,\* that as the vast scenes of extensive forests, which we are now considering as *distances*, are not subject to art, the idea of suggesting rules to *alter* and *improve* them is absurd. All we mean is to endeavour to teach the eye to admire justly, and to apply to *artificial* landscape those observations which occur in *natural*: for the source of beauty is the same in both.

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\* See page 286.





A remote wood, stretching along the horizon. If it had been nearer, the unvaried line would have been disagreeable.  
[Page 311.]



An irregular summit, with a regular base.  
[Page 312.]





An irregular base, forming bays and promontories.

[Page 312.]




The summit regularly varied.

[Page 312.]



## SECTION VIII.

### DISTANT FOREST SCENERY.



THE *permanent* beauties of a distant woody scene arise, first, from its *form*. There is as much variety in the form of a *distant wood* as in that of a single tree. We sometimes see continuous woods stretching along the horizon without any break. All seems of equal growth; the summit of the wood is contained under one straight line. This, except in very remote distance, is formal, heavy, and disgusting. The shape of distant woods is then only picturesque when it is broken by a varied line. This variation is, in some degree, occasioned by the different sizes of trees; but as the

size of trees where the distance is great has little effect, it is chiefly, and most essentially, occasioned by the inequalities of the ground.

A regular line at the *base* of a long range of woody scenery is almost as disgusting as at the *summit* of it. The woods must in some parts approach nearer the eye, and in other parts retire, forming the appearance of bays and promontories. At least, this is the most beautiful shape in which they appear. Sometimes, indeed, the inequalities of the ground prevent the eye from seeing the *base* of the wood; for, as the *base* is connected with the ground, it is commonly more obscured than the *summit*, which ranges along the sky.

All square, round, picked, or other formal shapes in distant woods are disgusting.

There should not only be breaks, but contrast also between the several breaks of a distant forest scene. A line *regularly varied* disgusts as much as an unvaried one.

Among the *permanent* beauties of distant woods, may be reckoned also the various kinds of trees, of which they are often composed.



Unless the distance be great, this mixture has its effect in the variety it produces both in form and colour. Large bodies of Fir also, and other species of Pines, have often a rich appearance, in a distance, among deciduous trees; but they must be Scotch Firs, Pinasters, Cluster Pines, or other clump-headed trees. The spiry-headed race, the Spruce Fir, the Silver Fir, and the Weymouth Pine, have here, too, as well as in the clump, a bad effect. Single they are sometimes beautiful; or two or three of them, here and there, by way of contrast, in large plantations, may be picturesque; but I think they are never so in large bodies. In general, however, the picturesque eye is little curious with regard to the kind of trees which compose a distant scene, for there are few kinds which do not harmonize together. It matters more, in this bold style of landscape, that the *masses*, of each *different kind*, should be large. The opposition is then strongly marked, and the contrast striking. If different trees are grouped in *small* bodies, the effect is totally lost in distance.

The last species of *permanent* beauty which we

take notice of in distant forest scenery arises from *works of art*. We mean not the *embellishments of art*, but such *rude works* as may almost be styled the works of Nature—the productions of convenience rather than of taste. We certainly draw the most picturesque objects from the grand store-house of Nature, though we condescend to admit *artificial* objects also; but, when they are admitted in this class, they must always be of the rough rather than of the polished kind.

Such objects we often meet with in the wild scenes of the forest,—spires, towers, lodges, bridges, cattle-sheds, cottages, winding pales, and other things of the same kind, which have often as beautiful an effect when seen at a *distance*, as we have just observed they have when sparingly met with in the internal parts of a forest. Only, the nearer the object is, we expect its form must be the more picturesque. Distance, no doubt, hides defects; and many an object may appear well in a remove, which, brought nearer, would disgust the eye.

## SECTION IX.

### SCENERY AFFECTED BY THE WEATHER.



HAVING thus considered what may properly be called the *permanent beauties of distant forest scenery*, we proceed to its *incidental beauties*. These arise principally from two causes—the *weather* and the *seasons*. As both are changeable, they both produce various appearances. The former affects chiefly the *sky*, the latter the *earth*.

The *weather* is a fruitful source of *incidental beauty*; and there are few states of it which do not impress some peculiar and picturesque character on landscape, to which it gives the leading tint. A country is chiefly affected by the

weather when it is *hazy* and *misty*—or when the sky is invested with some *cold tint*—or when the sun *rises*—or when it *shines full* at noon—or when it *sets*—or lastly, when the day is *stormy*. Each of these different states of the weather admits much variation; but, as it would be endless to trace these variations into detail, I shall take notice only of the *general effects* of each, and of these merely as they affect the forest. In other works of this kind, I have touched upon these sources of incidental beauty, as they affect lakes and mountains.\*

The calm, overcast, soft day, such as these climates often produce in the beginning of autumn—hazy, mild, and undisturbed—affords a beautiful medium, spreading over the woods a sweet grey tint, which is especially favourable to their distant appearances. The internal parts of the forest receive little advantage from this hazy medium; but the various tuftings of distant woods are wonderfully softened by it; and many

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\* See Observations on the Lakes of Cumberland, and Highlands of Scotland.

a form, and many a hue, which, in the full glare of sunshine would be harsh and discordant, are melted together in harmony. We often see the effects of this mode of atmosphere in various species of landscape, but it has nowhere a better effect than on the woods of the forest. Nothing appears, through mist, more beautiful than trees a little removed from the eye when they are opposed to trees at hand; for, as the foliage of a tree consists of a great number of parts, the contrast is very pleasing between the varied surface of the tree at hand, and the dead, unvaried appearance of the removed one. Very often a picture, in part unfinished, pleases the eye more from contrast than when every part is fully made out. Such, often, is the effect of the hazy medium.

The light mist is only a greater degree of haziness. Its object is a *nearer distance*, as a *remote* one is totally obscured by it. In this situation of the atmosphere not only all the strong tints of Nature are obscured, but all the *smaller* variations of *form* are lost. We look only for a general mass of softened harmony and

sober colouring, unmarked by any strength of effect. The vivid hues of autumn, particularly, appear to great advantage through this medium. Sometimes these mists are partial; and, if they happen to coincide with the composition of the landscape, this partiality is attended with peculiar beauty. I have remarked in other works of this kind,\* that when some huge promontory emerges from a spreading mist which hangs over one part of it, it not only receives the advantage of *contrast*, but it also becomes an object of *double grandeur*. We often see the woods of the forest also with peculiar advantage emerging through a mist in the same style of greatness. I have known likewise a *nearer distance, strongly illumined*, produce a good effect through a light, drizzling shower.

Nearly allied to mists is another incidental appearance, that of smoke, which is often attended with peculiar beauty in woody scenes. When we see it spreading in the forest glade, and forming a soft bluish background to the trees

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\* See Observations on Scotland, v. ii. p. 174.

which intercept it, their foliage and ramification appear to great advantage.

Sometimes, also, a good effect arises when the sky, under the influence of a bleak north wind, cold and overcast, is hung with blue or purple clouds lowering over the horizon. If under that part of the atmosphere the distant forest happens to range, it is overspread with a deep blue or a purple tint from the reflection of the clouds, and makes a very picturesque appearance. And yet I should be cautious in advising the painter to introduce it with that full strength in which he may sometimes observe it. The appearance of *blue* and *purple trees*, unless in very remote distance, offends; and though the artist may have authority from Nature for his practice, yet the spectator, who is not versed in such effects, may be displeased. Painting, like poetry, is intended to excite pleasure; and, though the painter, with this view, should avoid such images as are trite and vulgar, yet he should seize those only which are easy and intelligible. Neither poetry nor painting is a proper vehicle for the depths of learning. The painter, therefore,

will do well to avoid every *uncommon appearance* in Nature.

Within this caution, however, he will spread the prevailing tint of the day over his landscape—over his *whole* landscape. Nature tinges all *her* pictures in this harmonious manner. It is the greyish tint, or it is the blue, or it is the purple; or it is one of the vivid tints of illumination, red or yellow—whatever it may be, it blends with *all* the lights and shadows of the piece. This great principle of harmony which arises from the reflection of colour (in some degree, even when the air is diaphanous), must be observed by every painter who wishes to procure an effect. His picture must be painted from *one pallet*; and one key, as in music, must prevail through his whole composition. As the air, however, is the vehicle of all these tints, it is evident that in distances (in which we see through a deeper medium of tinged air) they will prevail most; and, of course, very little on foregrounds. The painter must observe this rule of Nature by bringing his tints regularly forward, and his foregrounds he must compose of such colours (mute, or vivid) as accord best with



the general hue of his landscape. Yet still he will be cautious how he spreads even the prevailing tint too strongly. Much error has arisen from this source; and some painters, under the idea of harmonizing, have given us blue and purple pictures. I know not whether Poussin himself did not sometimes fall into this fault. Nature's veil is always pure and transparent; yet, though in itself hardly discoverable, it will still give its kindred tinge to the features which are seen through it.

We have now considered *incidental beauty* as arising from the *colder* modifications of the air. We use the word *colder* not in a physical, but in a picturesque sense, as productive only of *sober colouring*, unattended with any force of effect. We come now to a more illustrious family of tints—the offspring of the sun. These are fertile sources of *incidental beauty* among the woods of the forest. The characteristic of them is *strong effect*. Let us first examine the incident of a *rising sun*.

The first dawn of day exhibits a beautiful obscurity. When the east begins just to brighten

with the reflections only of effulgence, a pleasing, progressive light, dubious and amusing, is thrown over the face of things. A single ray is able to assist the picturesque eye, which, by such slender aid, creates a thousand imaginary forms, if the scene be unknown; and, as the light steals gradually on, is amused by correcting its vague ideas by the real objects. What, in the confusion of twilight, perhaps, seemed a stretch of rising ground, broken into various parts, becomes now vast masses of wood, and an extent of forest.

As the sun begins to appear above the horizon, another change takes place. What was before only *form*, being now enlightened, begins to receive *effect*. This effect depends on two circumstances, the *catching lights* which touch the summits of every object, and the *mistiness* in which the rising orb is commonly enveloped.

The effect is often pleasing, when the sun rises in *unsullied brightness*, diffusing its ruddy light over the upper parts of objects, which is contrasted by the deeper shadows below; yet the effect is then only transcendent when he rises, accompanied by a train of vapours, in a misty

atmosphere. Among lakes and mountains, this happy accompaniment often forms the most astonishing visions ; and yet, in the forest, it is nearly as great. With what delightful effect do we sometimes see the sun's disc just appear above a woody hill ; or, in Shakespeare's language,—

‘Stand tiptoe on the misty mountain's top,’

and dart his diverging rays through the rising vapour. The radiance, catching the tops of the trees as they hang midway upon the shaggy steep, and touching, here and there, a few other prominent objects, imperceptibly mixes its ruddy tint with the surrounding mists, setting on fire, as it were, their upper parts, while their lower skirts are lost in a dark mass of varied confusion, in which trees, and ground, and radiance, and obscurity are all blended together. When the eye is fortunate enough to catch the glowing instant (for it is always a vanishing scene), it furnishes an idea worth treasuring among the choicest appearances of Nature. Mistiness alone, we have observed, occasions a confusion in objects which is often picturesque ; but the glory

of the vision depends on the glowing lights which are mingled with it.

Landscape painters, in general, pay too little attention to the discriminations of morning and evening. We are often at a loss to distinguish in pictures, the rising from the setting sun, though their characters are very different, both in the lights and shadows. The ruddy lights, indeed, of the evening are more easily distinguished; but it is not, perhaps, always sufficiently observed, that the shadows of the evening are much less opaque than those of the morning. They may be brightened, perhaps, by the numberless rays floating in the atmosphere, which are incessantly reverberated in every direction, and may continue in action after the sun is set. Whereas, in the morning, the rays of the preceding day having subsided, no object receives any light but from the immediate lustre of the sun. Whatever becomes of the theory, the fact, I believe, is well ascertained.

The *incidental beauties* which the *meridian sun* exhibits, are much fewer than those of the *rising sun*. In summer, when he rides high at noon and



Effect of a meridian sun, in a forest.



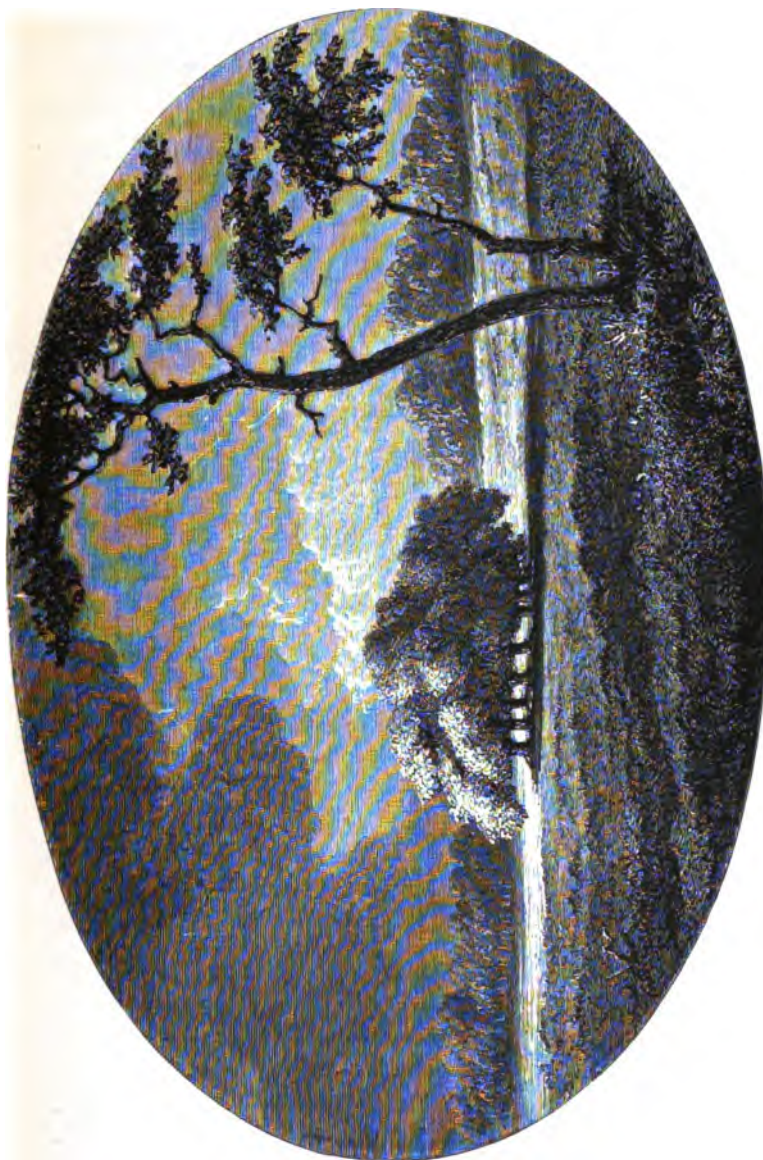
sheds his *perpendicular* ray, all is illumination ; there is no shadow to balance such a glare of light, no contrast to oppose it. The judicious artist, therefore, rarely represents his objects under a vertical sun. And yet no species of landscape bears it so well as the scenes of the forest. The tuftings of trees, which of all objects are the richest, from the little breaks of strong light and shade upon them, the recesses formed by the retiring boughs, the lighter foliage thus hanging over the darker, may all have an effect under a meridian sun. I speak chiefly, however, of the *internal scenes* of the forest which bear such *total brightness*, better than any other, as in them there is generally a *natural gloom* to balance it. The light, obstructed by close, intervening trees, will rarely predominate. Hence the effect is often fine. A strong sunshine striking a wood through some fortunate chasm, and reposing on the tuftings of a clump just removed from the eye, and strengthened by the deep shadows of the trees behind, appears to great advantage ; especially if some noble tree, standing on the foreground in deep shadow, flings athwart the sky its

dark branches, here and there illumined with a splendid touch of light.

In an *open country*, the most fortunate circumstance, that attends a meridian sun, is *cloudy weather*, which occasions *partial lights*. Then it is that the distant forest scene is spread with lengthened gleams, while the other parts of the landscape are in shadow. Nothing is more beautiful in itself, nothing illustrates more happily that great principle, the gradation of lights. The tuftings of trees are particularly adapted to catch these effects with advantage. There is a richness in them from the strong opposition of light and shade, which is wonderfully fine, and a softness which is very favourable to the principle of gradation. A distant forest, thus illumined, wants only a foreground to make it highly picturesque.

As the sun *descends*, the effect of its illumination becomes stronger. It is a doubt, whether the rising, or the setting sun is more picturesque. The great beauty of both depends on the contrast between splendour and obscurity. But this contrast is produced by these different incidents in





Effect of an evening sun, in a forest.



different ways. The grandest effects of the rising sun, are produced by the vapours which envelope it. The setting sun rests its glory on the gloom, which often accompanies its parting rays. A depth of shadow, hanging over the eastern hemisphere, gives the beams of the setting sun such powerful effect, that although in fact they are by no means equal to the splendour of a meridian sun, yet, through force of contrast, they appear superior.

A distant forest scene, under this brightened gloom, is particularly rich. The verdure of the summer leaf, and the varied tints of the autumnal one, are all lighted up with glowing colours.

The internal parts of the forest are not so happily disposed to catch the effects of a setting sun. The meridian ray, we have seen, may dart through the openings at the top, and produce a picture :\* but the flanks of the forest are generally too well guarded against its horizontal beams. Sometimes a recess, fronting the west, may receive a beautiful light, spreading in a

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\* See page 327.

lengthened gleam amidst the gloom of the woods which surround it: but this can only be had in the outskirts of the forest. Sometimes, also, we find in its internal parts, though hardly in its deep recesses, splendid lights, here and there, catching the foliage, and running among the branches which, though in Nature generally too scattered to produce an effect, yet if judiciously collected, may be beautiful on canvas.

We sometimes, also, see in a woody scene, coruscations, like a bright star, occasioned by a sun-beam darting through an eyelet-hole among the leaves. Many painters, and especially Rubens, have been fond of introducing this radiant spot in their landscapes. But, in painting, it is one of those trifles, which produces no *effect*. In poetry, indeed, it may produce a pleasing image. Shakespeare has introduced it beautifully, where, speaking of the force of truth entering a guilty conscience, he compares it to the sun, which

‘ Fires the proud tops of the eastern Pines,  
And darts his light through every guilty hole.’

It is one of those circumstances, which poetry

may offer to the *imagination*, but the pencil cannot well produce to the *eye*; and, if it could it were better omitted, as it attracts the attention from what is more interesting.

Under the sameness of Italian skies the beauties of a setting sun are hardly known. There the radiant orb courses his way with equal splendour from one end of the hemisphere to the other. He sets gloriously, but with little variety. Nothing refracts his beam. To the vapours of grosser climates, we owe those beautiful tints which accompany his whole journey through the skies, but especially his parting ray.

Thus far the sources of incidental beauty are all derived from *milder skies*. But the turbulence of the atmosphere is still a more fruitful source of picturesque effect, in the forest, as in other scenes. Unaided, indeed, by sunshine the storm has little power. But, when the force of the tempest separates the clouds into large, dark, convex forms, and the rays of the sun stream behind them athwart a clear horizon, if the objects correspond, a very sublime picture is exhibited.

No master was better acquainted with these circumstances than the younger Vandervelt. In all his sea-storms he avails himself of them, and is remarkable for the grand masses of light and shade which he produces.

The land-storm is equally a source of beauty. When the tempest scowls over the forest, as we traverse its deep recesses, what grandeur do the internal parts of it receive from the casual ray darting upon them! Or, when we view it as a distant object, and see the storm blackening behind the trees, with what wonderful effect does the sun, in an opposite direction, strike their tufted heads! But if that sun be setting, while the tempest is brewing over the hemisphere, black towards the east—lurid—more purple—and glowing with red, as it advances towards the west—then it is, that the utmost value is given to its *effect*. The castle, the lake, or the forest scene, whether viewed in shadow against the ruddy light, or illumined under the storm, appear in full grandeur; and we see all that light and shade in extreme contention, yet fully harmonized, can produce.

'Vain are the hopes by colouring to display  
The bright effulgence of the noon-tide ray ;  
Or paint the full-orbed ruler of the skies  
With pencils dipped in dull, terrestrial dyes.  
But when mild evening sheds her golden light,  
When morn appears, arrayed in modest white ;  
When soft suffusions of the vernal shower,  
Dims the pale sun ; or, at the thund'ring hour,  
When wrapt in crimson clouds, he hides his head ;  
Then catch the glow, and on the canvas spread.'

I know no appearance, indeed, in Nature, that is more awfully grand than the conjunction of a storm, and a sunset, on some noble mass of forest scenery. We may easily conceive that ignorance and superstition might magnify such a resplendent gloom into something supernatural. <sup>1</sup>In a passage which I lately quoted from Virgil, an idea of this kind is very picturesque, as well as poetically introduced. It is in the interview between Æneas and Evander, when the old chief informs his noble guest that frequently, in tempests, the simple Arcadians believed they saw heavenly forms behind the groves of the Tarpeian rock.

'Hoc nemus ; hunc, inquit, frondoso vertice collem,  
(Quis deus, incertum est) habitat deus. Arcades ipsum  
Credunt se vidisse Jovem, cum sæpe nigrantem  
*Ægida concuteret dextra nimbosque cieret.*'

As these great effects are certainly the most picturesque of all aerial appearances, it is rather surprising that landscape painters in general make so little use of them. It is much more common to see landscape painted under the uniform brightness of an equal light than to see it illumined by these grand circumstances of the atmosphere, in which light and shade are so happily combined.

The landscape-painter may say that effects like these are uncommon, and he chooses to paint Nature as he generally sees her.

The idea is good, but certainly these effects are common enough to have been often the object of *every one's* observation. He will not, I suppose, take the commonest *objects* as he finds them. And if he select his *objects*, why not the *most beautiful mode of exhibiting them*? The great effects of morning and evening suns, of mists, and storms, are not more uncommon than natural combinations of beautiful objects. But the real truth seems to be, that such effects are the most difficult to manage, and require great study and observation. The artist, therefore, who paints for his



bread rather than his character (an evil attending the art which can never be removed), chooses such an exhibition of light and shade as is the most easy to himself, and may likewise be most pleasing to the generality of his undistinguishing employers. Hence we have so great a number of glaring landscapes, which depend on nothing but the beauty and colouring of a few particular objects, without any attention to those grand effects which make landscape, by many degrees, the most sublime and interesting.

It is, perhaps, one of the great errors in painting (as, indeed, it is in literary, as well as in picturesque composition) to be more attentive to the finishing of *parts* than to the production of a *whole*. Whereas the master's great care should be, first to contrive a *whole*, and then to adapt the *parts*, as artificially as he can. I speak of *imaginary* landscape; when he paints a *particular view* his management must be just the reverse. He has the *parts* given him, and he must form them into a *whole* as he can, and this is often difficult.

Nothing, however, tends so much to produce a

whole as a proper distribution of light and shade, which we best obtain when we present a landscape under one of these grand effects of Nature. A common sunshine furnishes *lights*, not *masses*. It may throw a beautiful illumination on *particular objects*, but the *grand effects of Nature* furnish the only opportunities of forming the *masses of each*.

What gives the most grandeur to these effects is a *predominancy of shade*, which has always more dignified ideas annexed to it than a *predominancy of light*. And yet how little is this observed? In the generality of pictures and prints you see the balance on the other side, and are often offended with glaring spots of light, which destroy the idea of a whole. The painter should examine his piece, therefore, with great care. He may put out one light after another, and, reviewing his work with a fresh eye, may still find some glaring part to erase before he venture it abroad. On this occasion he may apply with good sense, and form into an adage, a very nonsensical expression (as it appears) in Shakespeare :—

‘Put out the light—and then—put out the light.’

If the artificial representation of *every* subject seems rather to require a balance of shade, in *sublime subjects* it is still more required. All writers on sublime subjects deal in shadows and obscurity.\* The grandeur of Jehovah is commonly represented by the Hebrew writers behind a cloud. The *imagination* makes up deficiencies by grander ideas than it is possible for the pencil to produce. Many images owe much of their sublimity to their *indistinctness*, and, frequently, what we call sublime is the effect of that heat and fermentation, which ensues in the imagination from its ineffectual efforts to conceive some dark, obscure idea beyond its grasp. Bring the same within the compass of its comprehension, and it may continue *great*, but it will cease to be *sublime*. This species of the *sublime* is oftener found in the composition of the poet than of the painter. In general, the poet has great advantages over the painter in the process of *sublimication*, if the term may be allowed. The business of the former is only to *excite ideas*; that of the latter, to *represent*

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\* See Burke on the Sublime.

variety. Among neighbouring Oaks, the bud of one is a tender green; of another almost yellow; of a third an ochre brown, perhaps nearly inclining to red; yet, each of these, as it opens, will probably accord harmoniously with the tint of its neighbour. But all trees have not the accommodating qualities of the Oak; the early shoots of evergreens, particularly of the Scotch Fir, are seldom in harmony with the foliage of the parent tree.

As Summer advances, the forest assumes a more determined and connected form. The germs and leaves are all unfolded; the hue of the foliage becomes harmonious, and the tuftings of the trees are prepared, as beds, for masses of light to rest on; which the spray, and the bloom of early Spring, unconnected and unformed, could not fully receive.

So far we have gained by the progress of the year. But the great objection to Summer arises from the uniformity of its hue. The face of Nature is covered with one unvaried mantle of green, for, though the nicer eye may trace many shades in this general colour, yet, on the whole,

it is both too vivid and too uniform for the pencil.

The reign of *Summer* scarcely endures three months. The leaves, within that period, begin to change their hue, and give way to Autumn, which presents an appearance much more picturesque, and, indeed, the most replete with *incidental beauty* of any season of the year. This is so evident, that painters have chosen the Autumn, with almost universal predilection, as the season of landscape. The leafy surface of the forest is, at that time, so varied, and the masses of foliage are yet so full, that they allow the artist great latitude in producing his tints, without injuring the breadth of his lights.

‘The fading, many-coloured woods,  
Shade deepening over shade, the country round  
Imbrown; a varied umbrage, dusk and dun,  
Of every hue, from wan, declining green,  
To sooty dark.’

Yet the Autumn, in its wane, is not so pleasing. It has too forlorn an aspect. The leaves are withered, and their tufts shrivelled and shapeless. This remark, however, affects trees only at hand. The home plantation suffers where you walk so

near the fading tree, as to see Nature in decay; but at a distance the withered effect is not easily discerned. In the wane of Autumn, however, there are other defects. The Ash, and some other trees, have deserted their station in the forest; they have shed their leaves, and left a cheerless blank. Besides, the verdure of the forest is too much wasted; and the brown and yellow tints, beautiful as they are, become too predominant; for the prevalence of these hues in Autumn fatigues the eye, no less than the prevalence of green in Summer. Only, indeed, the Autumnal tints will ever be more varied. The intermediate time is the season of picturesque beauty; when the greens and the browns and the yellows are blended together by a variety of *middle tints* which often create the most exquisite harmony.

Of all the hues of Autumn, those of the Oak are commonly the most harmonious. As its vernal tints are more varied than those of other trees, so are its autumnal. In an oaken wood you see every variety of green, and every variety of brown; owing, either to the different exposure of the tree, its different soil, or its different

nature; but it is not my business to inquire into causes.

In the beechen grove you seek in vain for this variety. In the early Autumn, indeed, you see it, when the extremities only of the tree are just tinged with ochre: but, as the year advances, the eye is generally fatigued with one deep monotony of orange; though among all the hues of Autumn, it is, in itself, perhaps the most beautiful. The painter imitates it the most happily by a touch of terra de Sienna. But the eye is palled even with beauty in profusion, and calls for contrast.

The same uniformity reigns, though of a different hue, when Ash, or Elm prevails. No fading foliage, indeed, of any *one* kind that I know, produces harmony, except that of the Oak.

The hues, however, of the *distant forest*, when most discordant, are often harmonized by the intervening trees on the *foreground*. We can bear the glow of the distant Beech wood, when it is contrasted, at hand, by a spreading Oak, whose foliage has yet scarce lost its summer tint,—or by an Elm or an Ash, whose fading leaves have assumed a yellowish hue.

But, after all, the autumnal forest is an instrument easily untuned. One frosty night or parching blast may introduce some striking discord ; though, on the other hand, it is true, by softening some discordant tint, it may, as easily, introduce a harmony, which did not exist before. Here art comes to the aid of Nature. The pencil fixes the scene in the happy moment ; and the fading tints of Autumn become perennial.

I have known some planters endeavour, in their improvements, to range their trees in such a manner as in the wane of the year, to receive all the beauty of autumnal colouring. The attempt is vain, unless they could so command the weather as to check, or produce at pleasure, those tints which Nature has subjected to so many accidents. A general direction is all that can be given. Oak is rarely in discord ; but Beech and Elm can, as rarely, be depended on. All must be left to chance ; and, after the utmost that art can do, the wild forest, with its casual discords and monotonies, will present a thousand beauties which no skill of man can rival.

Thus the beauties of the waning year are fixed



rather by the weather than by the calendar. We often see them vanish in October ; and we sometimes see a fine autumnal effect in the beginning of November ; nay, even later, we may trace the beauties of the declining year, and

‘ Catch the last smile  
Of Autumn beaming o’er the yellow woods.’

Even when the beauty of the landscape is gone, the charms of Autumn may remain. After the rage of summer is abated, and before the rigours of winter are yet set in, there are often days of such heavenly temperature, that every mind must feel their effect. Thompson, to whom the beauties of Nature were familiar, thus describes a day of this kind :—

‘ The morning shines,  
Serene in all its dewy beauties bright,  
Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.  
O’er all the soul its sacred influence breathes,  
Inflames imagination, through the breast  
Infuses every tenderness, and, far  
Beyond dim earth, exalts the swelling thought.’

To the picturesque beauties of Autumn we may add, that the setting sun, at that season, is commonly richer than when the days are of the same

length in the Spring, or indeed at any other season.

But the *leafy forest* is not solely the object of *incidental beauty*. The picturesque eye finds great amusement even in its wintry scenes, when it has thrown its rich mantle aside, and appears, to the common eye, naked and deformed.

The hazy sunshine of a frosty morning, is accompanied with an indistinctness peculiar to itself. The common haziness of a summer day spreads over the landscape one general grey tint; and, as we have had occasion to remark in different circumstances, is often the source of great beauty. But the effect we are here observing is of a different kind. It is generally more partial—more rich—and mixing with streaks of different coloured clouds, which often form behind it, produces a very pleasing effect. The case is, the sun is lower in the horizon and produces an effect which a meridian sun cannot do.

Great beauty, also, arises in Winter, from the different tints of the spray. The dark-brown spray of the Birch, for instance, has a good effect, among that of a lighter tinge; and, when the forest

is deep, all this little bushiness of ramification has, in some degree, the effect of foliage.

The boles of trees likewise, and all their larger limbs, add, at this season, a rich variety and contrast to the forest; the smooth and the rough, the light and the dark, often beautifully opposing each other. In Winter, the *stem* predominates, as the *leaf* in Summer. It is amusing in one season to see the branches losing and discovering themselves among the foliage; and it is amusing, also, in the other, to walk through the desolate forest, and see the various combinations of stems—the traversing of branches across each other in so many beautiful directions—and the pains, which Nature takes in forming a *wood*, as well as a *single tree*.\* She leaves no part unclosed; but pushing in the branch, or the spray, as the opening allows, she fills all vacant space, and brings the heads of trees, which grow near each other, into contact; while every step we take presents us with some beautiful variety in her mode of forming the fretted roof under which we walk.

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\* See page 136.

In Winter, too, the effect of evergreens is often pleasing. Holly, when it happens to be well combined, and mixed in just proportion, makes an agreeable contrast. Ivy, hanging round the Oak, if it be not too profuse, we have already observed, is a beautiful appendage to its grandeur. I have seen some parts of the forest, where the stem of almost every tree was covered with it. This indeed was not picturesque; but it gave the wood a very odd appearance, by exhibiting so total an inversion of Nature. In Summer, the tops of trees are green, and their stems commonly bare. Here the tops were bare, while the stems were in full leaf.

In a light hoar-frost, before the sun and air begin to shake the powder from the trees, the wintry forest is often beautiful, and almost exhibits the effect of tufted foliage. As single objects also, trees, under this circumstance, are curious. The black branches, whose under-sides are not covered with rime, often make a singular contrast with the whitened spray. Trees of minuter ramification and foliage, as the Beech, the Elm, and the Fir, appear, under this circumstance, to most advantage. The Ash, the Horse-

chestnut, and other plants of coarser form, have no great beauty. Trees also, thus covered with hoar-frost, have sometimes—if not a picturesque—at least an uncommon effect, when they appear against a lurid cloud; especially when the sun shines strongly upon them.

But, although many appearances in winter are beautiful and amusing, and some of them even picturesque, yet the judicious painter will rarely introduce them in landscape, because he has choice of more beautiful effects, when Nature appears dressed to more advantage.

Picturesque pleasure arises from two sources—from the *beauty and combination of the objects* represented; and from the *exactness of the representation*. Thus, we are pleased with the picture of a noble landscape, the composition of which is just, and the lights well-disposed; and, yet, a sort of pleasure arises from seeing a bright table, a deal-board, or a rasher of bacon naturally represented.\*

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\* Deceptions of this kind used frequently to be hung up in the exhibition room in London, among the works of capital artists, where indeed they were unworthy of a place.

Since this passage was written, I have met with the following

But while the former of these is the work of genius, the latter is a mere mechanical knack. The one, therefore, is admired by the man of taste—the other, except for a moment, only by the ignorant and uninformed.

This is just the case before us. The painter, who chooses a winter subject, in general, gives up composition and effect, to show how naturally he can represent snow, or hoar-frost. It is almost impossible to produce a good effect with these appendages of winter; they must naturally create false and glaring lights, to which the painter generally makes his composition subservient.

Among the sources of incidental beauty in a forest may be mentioned, (what perhaps may appear odd) the felling of timber. If you wish to fell trees with some particular view to improve-

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excellent remark in one of Sir Joshua Reynolds' notes on Mr. Mason's translation of Fresnoy, p. 114 :—'Deception, which is so often recommended by writers on the theory of painting, instead of advancing the art, is in reality carrying it back to its infant state. The first essays of painting were certainly nothing but mere imitations of individual objects, and when this amounted to a *deception*, the artist had accomplished his purpose.'

ment, the intention is often frustrated. It must be done artfully, and considerately, or in general, your design will be apparent, and the eye disgusted. The master of the scene himself, who is always on the spot, and examines it frequently from every stand, if he be a man of taste, will be the best improver, and direct the felling axe with most judgment. At the same time, we frequently see trees cut down carelessly for the purpose of utility, which have opened greater beauties than any they possessed themselves when standing; though the preconceived loss of them was greatly lamented. But this can only happen where trees abound.

I shall conclude this enumeration of the incidental beauties belonging to forest scenery, with an appendage, which we frequently see in it—that of a timber-wain, an object of the most picturesque kind, especially when drawn by oxen. Here the tree, when dead, adorns again the landscape which it adorned when living. A gilded chariot is an object which art has industriously tricked out and decorated. It is of a piece, therefore, with all such artificial objects, as are the most unlike Nature. Whereas the timber-wain is at least a piece of

simple art, and the rudeness of its form and materials, is a property which it has in common with the works of Nature. Oxen, too, are more picturesque in themselves than horses. Much of the beauty, however, of this incident arises from its being adapted to the scene. A wain of timber is beautiful in a forest, but would lose much of its beauty in the streets of a town.



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